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German Political Refugees

In the United States during the Period

From 1815-1860.



BY

ERNEST BRUNCKEN, MILWAUKEE.

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German Political Refugees in the United States during the Period from 1815—1860.

By ERNEST BRUNCKEN.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

The population of the five states developed out of the old territory northwest of the Ohio, and in a less degree of many other states in all sections of the Union, contains a very large element of German birth or recent descent. The admixture of this Teutonic element differs in importance in the different states, as well as in different portions of each state. Statistics, which of necessity show only the bare numbers of those immigrated from German countries, with their immediate descendants, are quite inadequate as a basis for estimating the influence of this element on the development and history of these sections, for the reason that many other factors besides numbers enter into the problem. Still, the census figures are of importance, and it will appear that the three states which have the largest proportion of Teutonic inhabitants, to wit: Wisconsin, Ohio and Illinois, show the strongest and most numerous traces of German influence.¹

Among the German immigrants of these states, who arrived in this country between the years 1815 and 1860, there was a class, small in proportion to the total number of arrivals, but of peculiar importance to the understanding of the part played by the German element in the

developing of the American people. This class is that of the political exiles, comprising not only those who were compelled to leave their native land to escape punishment for political offenses, but also many who voluntarily expatriated themselves on account of dissatisfaction with the political conditions prevailing at home.

The political refugees were mostly men of considerable intelligence and education, of enthusiastic and energetic temperaments, and, moreover, men with ideals to which they were ready to devote their activities, as was proven by the fact itself that they had risked their homes, their possessions, and in many cases their liberty and lives in order to change the political condition of their country. Their presence on this side of the Atlantic acted on the inert mass of their countrymen in the United States like a leaven to give a higher and more varied life. This effect was shown first within the body of the German residents themselves. Soon the new vigor began to exercise its influence on the other elements of population, especially in the field of politics. Particularly, when the slavery question became a burning issue, the re-alignment of parties after the rise of Republicanism was determined to a considerable degree by the refugees, who by that time had become the leaders of a great part of the

¹) An attempt at estimating the number of Germans and their descendants living in the United States is made by Theodore Poesche in Eickhoff's "Aus der Neuen Heimath", page 159. Mr. Poesche was for many years statistician in the treasury department at Washington, and is also a well-known writer on ethnological subjects, especially on account of his volume "The Aryans". (See also note 61.) From the table found in the place above mentioned it appears among other things, that from 1820 to 1860, inclusive, the number of Germans who came to the United States was 1,186,376.

German voters. After the civil war, during which many of the refugees distinguished themselves both in the field and the council chamber, their direct influence on public affairs gradually declined. But during the short period of their ascendancy they modified profoundly the life and attitude of the German element, and thereby the character of the American people. Nor is it difficult to find their vestiges in the institutions, social, political and religious, of a large portion of the United States.

The German element in this country, numerically strong though it had been from early colonial times, had not exercised a noticeable direct influence on the public life and institutions of the nation, until the advent of the class which forms the subject of this essay. It was aptly compared by Friedrich Kapp to an army without officers. Almost without exception the German immigrants devoted themselves diligently and exclusively to the bettering of their material condition. They were largely sprung from the poorest and most ignorant classes of the Fatherland. They had neither time, inclination nor ability to concern themselves with affairs outside of their farms or workshops. Their descendants either disappeared in the general mass of the American people—disappeared so completely that in many cases not even their names remain to testify to their German ancestry—or they kept apart from the general current of the national life so entirely that they might as well have dwelt on another continent for all the influence they had, directly, on the national growth and character. It is true that where the German element was particularly strong, as notably in some portions of Pennsylvania, there were not lacking the beginnings of activities not purely private and economic. But these germs of intellectual life, separated as they were from both

the Anglo-American and German parent stocks, languished and withered long before they could come into flower and fruit.

It would be a misapprehension of the situation if one were to infer from this lack of direct and open influence that our national development was in no wise affected by the presence of so large a number of Germans. The mere comingling of races must of necessity have had its indirect and physiological effects. Moreover, in the economic condition of the country, the German, and in particular the German farmer, began at an early date to teach by his example better methods to his neighbor of different stock. But these influences, exercised unconsciously, are hard to trace in detail, and could not have prevented the German element from disappearing without leaving vestiges that history can record with any degree of precision. It was not till the political refugees began to furnish officers to the Teutonic host that the Germans began to play a perceptible part in the struggles of American life.

The time when this new class of immigrants first made their appearance was that of the restoration following the overthrow of Napoleon. It coincides almost exactly with the time when German life in this country was at its lowest ebb. During the period from the Revolutionary War to the War of 1812, there was but little immigration from Germany. As a consequence the amalgamation of the German residents made very rapid progress. German churches adopted English as the language of Divine service; German newspapers suspended or were changed into English ones; in many neighborhoods where for almost a century German had been the language of business and familiar conversation the younger generation preferred the English tongue. But very soon after general

peace had followed the disturbances of the Napoleonic era, a new stream of immigration set in. Its character was at first very much like the older one. As formerly, most of the immigrants were ignorant and poor. For at least another decade a large proportion of them came as redemptioners, paying for their passage by a period of what was practically slavery. The cruel abuses and scandals connected with immigrant ships did not cease until after ocean steamers had replaced the slow sailing vessels. But soon the character of immigration changed. Beginning with the third decade of the century, an increasing number of well-to-do country people came to take up the fertile agricultural lands of the west. It is not the purpose, at present, to write a history of German immigration, and consequently the various interesting features and incidents of this new stream of arrivals need not further be touched upon, except so far as to remind the reader that the overwhelming majority of the newcomers continued to have no purpose beyond the bettering of their material condition.

But for the first time, during this period, the Teutonic army had its officers,* composed of men of superior education, and with purposes in mind that looked beyond the gaining of a good livelihood and amassing of fortunes. To explain the causes of this change, a glance at the political and social conditions of the Fatherland will be a necessary part of our inquiry. The changes that went on there determined the

*EDITORIAL NOTE.—This is rather too broad a statement, for it sounds as if the German immigrants before 1830 had had no intellectual leaders. Certainly Pastorius, Muehlenberg, and a great many other ministers of the Gospel, who came to this country in ante-revolutionary times, were men of superior education, and also wielded no small influence in political matters.

changes in the character and attitude of the political emigration. As the year 1848 marks an epoch in the history of Germany, so it did in that of the Germans in this country. The most natural division of our subject will therefore be into the periods before and after 1848.

We call these men political exiles. But nowhere can political movements be entirely separated from religious and social agitations, and least of all is this possible in the case of the men we speak of. Few political movements were ever so largely determined by the religious and philosophical tenets of its promoters as the movement for German unity and freedom. To the Radicals who landed upon our shores liberty meant a great deal more than merely a certain form of government and a certain system of laws. Quite as important as these was, to them, the freedom of thought and belief concerning the greatest questions of human existence. As true heirs of the generation of Kant, Fichte and Hegel, questions of metaphysics seemed to them very closely related to questions of constitutions. This tendency to mingle their religion, or lack of religion, very intimately with their politics, became even more pronounced in this country, where they found themselves strangers in a strange land, and for a season were cut off from political activity because they had not yet acquired citizenship. We will, therefore, have considerable to say about the attitude of the refugees towards religion and the churches.

The bitter enmity of the majority of the political immigrants, at least of those coming after 1848, to every kind of ecclesiastical organization was one of the main factors that have perpetuated the division of the German population of the United States into three distinct camps, approximately of equal strength. These camps may be called those of the Catholics, the

Lutherans and the Liberals. Although based primarily on differences of religious belief or unbelief, this division pervades to a greater or less extent all relations of life, from ordinary business affairs to party politics, on the one hand, and social gatherings on the other. It is as noticeable to-day as it was fifty years ago, and persists to a considerable extent even among the second and third generation of Germans in America. Of course it could not truthfully be said that the refugees created these divisions; but we shall find that they did much to emphasize and embitter them. The effects of these circumstances will form an important part of our subject.

The struggle for the abolition of slavery was the means of drawing the greater part of the refugees who came after 1848 away from their hopes of renewed revolutions in the Fatherland, their anti-ecclesiastical warfare, and their dreams of an ideal state. Many of them threw themselves into that struggle with an ardor equal to that with which they had struggled for the freedom of their native country ten years before. The opportunity for useful and practical activity in the political field, which the anti-slavery agitation afforded, reacted favorably upon the refugees themselves. Most of them threw off some of their radicalism and adopted their views and purposes to actual conditions. At the same time they became Americanized at a much more rapid rate than before. Having found something to do, on this side of the Atlantic, that was worth doing, they ceased to long for a renewal of revolutionary movements in Europe. When the slavery controversy and the civil war which followed it had come to a triumphant close, not a few of the young revolutionists from the Rhine had become well-balanced, moderate, but progressive men, entirely fit for the position

of leadership which they continued to hold among large masses of their countrymen in the United States.

In the eyes of a majority of the German element in this country, a certain glamor surrounds the memory of the "Forty-eighters," a glamor which leads many Germans to over-estimate both the personal excellence and abilities of these men and their influence on the history of the United States. An unbiased judgment will declare that few of them possessed more than a respectable mediocrity of talents. But at one critical juncture of our national history their influence actually dictated the direction of our development. The success of the Republican party in the Northwest was made possible because the "Forty-eighters" had succeeded in winning a large proportion of Germans into its ranks. Without this element, Lincoln would probably not have been elected. Again, it was the influence of the refugees that kept Missouri from joining the Confederacy. Here are two conspicuous instances of the work of these men, which make it imperative for the student to learn to understand them and their work if he would correctly understand the history of our politics. Their influence on the institutions of those states in which their power was most strongly exerted is even more profound, though less easily traced. Taking it all in all, their presence cannot be ignored in a complete and accurate survey of American history, no matter how carefully the investigator may guard against unjustified racial predilections.

CHAPTER II.

THE SOURCES.

The material for a monograph such as is attempted here must be gathered from a large number of scattered publications, mostly in the German language, and not

as a rule, easily accessible to the majority of students. As the subject consists not merely of definite acts of individuals and organized bodies, but to a considerable extent of tendencies, opinions, and what may be called the intellectual atmosphere in which the individuals had their being, it is not always easy to assign a definite source for each statement made. The resulting picture of the class of men described, in their relation to the general aspect of American history, is of the nature of a composite photograph, which will be the more accurate the greater the number of individuals from whom it is taken.

There are two principal classes of publications from which a notion of our subject can be obtained. These are the newspapers published or edited in the United States by members of the refugee class, and the large number of books either written by them or in which their doings are more or less fully discussed. In addition to the newspapers proper, there are a few other periodicals which will furnish a large amount of material for our subject. One of the most important of these is the monthly magazine "*Atlantis*," which was published by Christian Essellen, a former member of the German parliament at Frankfurt.² It appeared, with some interruptions, during the years 1852 to 1858, its place of publication being successively Detroit, Milwaukee, Davenport, Cleveland and Buffalo. It was really a high-class magazine, having for contributors many of the ablest Germans in the country. Naturally much space was devoted to the discussion of subjects specially interesting to German-Americans. Leading edito-

rials, particularly on political subjects, were mostly from the pen of Mr. Essellen himself. An exceptionally valuable feature was the reviews of German-American newspapers and other publications which appeared from time to time. In these will be found many notes on the smaller and more ephemeral publications and their editors, which are not to be found anywhere else. For most of the publications of this class have become quite inaccessible, and of many of them not even a single copy is known to exist, let alone complete files. Yet some of them would be of considerable interest because they were edited by men who later rose to prominence. A publication somewhat similar in scope to the "*Atlantis*," but lighter in tone and more given to fiction and feuilleton is "*Meyer's Monatshefte*," published at New York. It contains occasional articles which throw interesting lights on the subject of this discussion.

In the very long list of German books of travel in the United States during the period here considered there is hardly one in which some space is not given to the condition of the Germans in the country, and incidentally thereto many references to the political exiles and their doings appear. One of the most interesting of this class for present purposes was written by Moritz Busch³, under the title of "*Wanderungen zwischen Hudson und Mississippi*." It would be useless to attempt an enumeration of the large number of books of this sort in which occasional notes have been found with reference to the present subject. Some of the most important have been cited in foot notes.

² Essellen was born at Hamm, Westphalia, in 1822, became a member of the extreme Left in the Frankfort parliament, and died in an asylum for the insane in New York in May 1859. See chapter IV.

³ This is the Busch who later became well-known as Bismarck's Boswell. He has published voluminous books of travel, as well as many magazine articles.

Not a few of the numerous Germans who at one time or another, during the period from 1820 to 1860, had to go into exile for political reasons have published their recollections. But among these are unfortunately few who made their home in this country and took part in cis-Atlantic affairs. Still fewer have considered their rather obscure work in exile of as much importance to record as their more dramatic and conspicuous acts in the revolutionary movements of the Fatherland. But nevertheless the student should not neglect the memoirs even of those who never touched American soil, but spent their years in Switzerland, England or France. For in no other way can so clear a picture be gained of the typical characteristics of this class of men. Many of the things which strike one as remarkable among the refugees in America can be understood only by an insight into the life and character of the whole class, no matter where they had found a refuge, and who are free from the modifying influences of cis-Atlantic life.

Among such works some of the most interesting and instructive may be mentioned. One of these is by Ludwig Bamberger⁴, who lived at Paris and after the amnesty returned to Germany, to become a leading figure in the parliamentary life of his native country. Another is written by a woman, Malvida v. Meysenbug⁵, who was on intimate terms with many of the members of the exile colony in London. Her work is charmingly

written and affords many glimpses into the private and familiar lives of the exiles, such as are rarely found in the writings of men, who are preoccupied with matters political.

Among the recollections which touch directly on American matters may be mentioned those of Julius Froebel, a leading member of the Frankfurt parliament of 1848. He spent a number of years in the United States without ever making this country his permanent home. After he had become reconciled with the German authorities he returned to his native land and rose to considerable political and official eminence. Among his numerous writings the two works mentioned in the note are of the greatest interest for the present purpose⁶. Very interesting are the recollections of Heinrich Boernstein⁷, which appeared originally in various German newspapers, especially the "*Westliche Post*" of St. Louis and "*Der Westen*" of Chicago, but were afterwards published in book form⁸.

One of the most interesting volumes of this sort, and in some respects a literary curiosity, is an autobiography by Charles G. Reemelin of Cincinnati. Mr. Reemelin (originally spelled Ruemelin) was a native of Heilbronn, Wuerttemberg, and came to the United States in 1832, barely 20 years old. He was not, strictly speaking, a political refugee, but left his native country in consequence of a widespread movement which had originated in political discontent, as will appear in the next chapter. In his new home he acquired a

4) *Erinnerungen von Ludwig Bamberger*. Herausgegeben von Paul Nathan. Berlin, Georg Rainer, 1890.

5) *Memoiren einer Idealistin, von Malvida v. Meysenbug*. Schuster & Loeffler, Berlin und Leipzig. 5th edition, 1900. 3 volumes.

6) *Aus Amerika. Erfahrungen, Reisen und Studien*. 2 volumes. Leipzig, 1856. — *Ein Lebenslauf*. Stuttgart, 1890. 2 volumes.

7) Heinrich Boernstein was forced to leave his native country and thereafter for a while published an extremely radical paper at Paris. After the coup d'état by Napoleon he came to the United States. He served with distinction in the civil war.

8) Boernstein, *Fünfundsiebenzig Jahre in der alten und neuen Welt*. 2 volumes, 1881.

comfortable fortune and became a politician of considerable local importance. In his old age he published the story of his life, in a quaint English style which reads like a literal translation from the German. The little book is very entertaining because of the frank egotism of its author, who evidently deems the smallest detail of his business or private life of as much interest as the weightiest public question. For this very reason the book furnishes much valuable material. The many persons with whom Mr. Reemelin came into opposition during a long public career seem to him to have been invariably villains of the deepest dye. The author has written a number of other books, and frequently contributed to both German and English newspapers in this country⁹.

There are a few books that treat expressly of the history of the German element in the United States, and in which much material will be found concerning the subjects of the present discussion. These books were founded on original investigation, and as the material collected by their authors, so far as it was unpublished, has disappeared, or is at least not accessible, the books of this class must be considered as primary evidence in the same sense in which Livy is a primary source of Roman history. Among these books the most valuable is Koerner's "*Das Deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten*"¹⁰. Its author was one of the most eminent Germans who ever lived in the United States. Coming to this country in 1833, at the age of 22, after having been concerned in the Frankfurt riots of that year, he became

a lawyer in Belleville, Illinois. In 1845 he was elected a justice of the Supreme Court of his adopted state. In 1852 he became lieutenant governor; he joined the Republican party upon its organization, organized the Forty-third Illinois Volunteer Infantry and was appointed colonel on General Fremont's staff, became minister to Spain under Lincoln, and was a Grant elector in 1868. His book covers the period from 1818 to 1848 and seems to have been intended, in part, to remove the impression that nothing worth mentioning had been done by Germans in this country between the days of the Revolutionary War and the coming of the "Forty-eighters." This notion was at one time widely prevailing, as a result of the rivalries between the latter element and the older German leaders (See *infra*, Chapter V). Mr. Koerner's book is the result of a great amount of personal correspondence, and is full of valuable biographical matter on a great number of prominent Germans in all parts of the country.

Another valuable work of this class is Franz v. Loehér's "*Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika*"¹¹. This was really the first attempt to write a history of the Germans in the United States, from the days of Pastorius down. But the larger part of the book is taken up with a review of the "*Zustände*" rather than the "*Geschichte*" and is based largely on the personal observations of the writer. The latter spent two years in the country as a traveler and visitor rather than an immigrant. After his return to Europe he became a professor in the universities of Goettingen and Mu-

9) Life of Charles Reemelin, in German: Carl Gustav Ruemelin. From 1814 to 1892, written by himself, in Cincinnati, between 1890 and 1892. Cincinnati, Weier & Dalker, printers, 356 Walnut Street, 1892.

10) Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika, 1818—1848. Von Gustav Koerner. Cincinnati, A. E. Wilde & Co., 1880.

11) Cincinnati und Leipzig, 1847. 2nd edition, Goettingen 1855.

nich, and wrote numerous books on travel and allied subjects, as well as some poetical works.

A third volume belonging to this class is "*In der Neuen Heimath*"¹². Its editor and principal contributor is Anton Eickhoff, late a representative in Congress from New York. Among other contributors are the late Oswald Seidensticker, of Pennsylvania; H. A. Rattermann, of Ohio, and P. V. Deuster, of Wisconsin. The volume is less exclusively biographical than Koerner's book, but contains many facts drawn from the personal recollections of the contributors.

Biographical notes regarding men of prominence that do not come within the period covered by Koerner are apt to be found in "*Schem's Deutsch-Amerikanisches Conversations-Lexikon*"¹³, to which a number of the best German-American writers have contributed.

The fifteen volumes of the "*Deutsche Pionier*"¹⁴ will furnish some material, although it is quite noticeable that the subject we are dealing with here is not a favorite with the contributors to that publication. There is far more to be found in the "*Pionier*" concerning the older periods than the time covered by this monograph. Very likely the doings of the political refugees may have seemed too recent for historical treatment. Many of the contributors to this little magazine were themselves of the refugee class, and it is to be regretted that more of them have not considered it worth while to publish their recollections of their early days in the adopted country, and especially of their and their friends' participation in the struggle against slavery.

It should be observed that none of these attempts at a historical treatment of the German element have special reference to the particular class of immigrants with which we are concerned. But the members of that class have furnished so large a portion of the leaders of their nationality in this country that a history of the German element must of necessity deal to a very large extent with political refugees.

In addition to the works just mentioned, a number of local histories will be drawn upon by every student of the subject. Such histories, among others, are Rudolf A. Koss, "*Milwaukee*"; Stierlin, "*Der Staat Kentucky und die Stadt Louisville*"; Schnake, "*Geschichte der Deutschen Presse in St. Louis*."

A series of writings by various men belonging to the "Forty-eighters," which throw considerable light on the mental attitude of that class of men towards American institutions before they had become somewhat acclimated, is known as the "*Atlantische Studien*"¹⁵. Among the contributors to this collection Friedrich Kapp is easily the most important. This writer is best known as the biographer of Generals Steuben and DeKalb, and one of the pioneers in the study of German-American history during the colonial period. He lived in the United States from 1850 to 1870, took an active part in the early history of the Republican party, was a Lincoln elector in 1860, and held the office of immigration commissioner for the state of New York. But he never ceased to be a European at heart and finally returned to his native country. His voluminous writings have

12) *In der Neuen Heimath. Geschichtliche Mittheilungen über die deutschen Einwanderer in allen Theilen der Union.* Herausgegeben von Anton Eickhoff, New York, 1884.

13) New York, 11 volumes. 1869 to 1874.

14) A monthly magazine devoted to German-American history, edited by Henry A. Rattermann, at Cincinnati, between 1869 and 1884.

15) *Atlantische Studien von Deutschen in Amerika.* 8 volumes, Goettingen, 1853 to 1855.

avowedly for their principal object the strengthening of the liberal and national sentiment in Germany, and his views of American events and institutions must be considered with that qualification in mind. Although Kapp never became an American at heart, he got rid quicker than most of his colleagues of those radical and impracticable extravagances which during a number of years distinguished the majority of the refugees of 1848 (See *infra*, Chapter IV). The writings of Kapp which are most important for the purpose of learning the mental attitude of the German Republican leaders of the *ante bellum* period, of which they are in most respects typical are the following: "*Die Politik der Ver Staaten unter Praesident Pierce*," in *Atlantische Studien*, Vol. III, page 1; "*Die Politischen Parteien in den Ver. Staaten*," *Atlantische Studien*, Vol. I, page 81; "*Die Sklavenfrage in den Ver. Staaten geschichtlich entwickelt*," Goettingen, 1854 (appeared at first serially in *Atl. Studien*, Vols. V to VII); this work was later extended and republished under the title "*Geschichte der Sklaverei in den Vereinigten Staaten*," Hamburg, 1861. A valuable characterization of Friedrich Kapp, with a bibliography of his writings, has appeared in the "*Deutsch-Amerikanische Magazin*," Vol. I, page 16, by the pen of the editor, H. A. Rattermann¹⁶.

The sometimes rather extravagant doings of the refugees attracted the attention of "knownothings" during the period when that and other organizations hostile to foreigners flourished, and occasional notes regarding them may be found in publications of that character. These publications are all of a bitterly partisan tone and accuracy of statement

regarding the enemy need not be expected of them. A few typical know-nothing books may be mentioned here, as some of them have been cited occasionally in this monograph.

John P. Sanderson published "*Republican Landmarks; Views of American Statesmen on Foreign Immigration*"¹⁷. The object of the book is stated to be "to give the opinions of others, not the author's own." But the promise is not adhered to. In default of better material the volume may be of some use, because it prints translations of some of the platforms and manifestoes of the Radicals, notably the program adopted by the "*Freie Deutsche*" organization at Louisville in 1854 (page 219). How well informed the author is regarding the men about whom he writes may be judged from the fact that on the same page he apparently confounds Carl Heinzen with Heinrich Heine.

A book of the same type is "*Immigration; Its Evils and Consequences*," by S. C. Busey, M. D.¹⁸ The learned doctor's accuracy becomes evident from the difficulty he has with German names. On page 32 he spells the German orator from Texas, Wipprecht, first "Wipprecht," and afterwards "Whiptretch," calling it naively "a real jaw-breaking German name." Kinkel appears repeatedly as "Kinkle." In blissful ignorance of the relation between German and Dutch, he delights in giving honest "High Dutch" citizens the appellation "*Mynheer*."

There is a very large number of books from which occasional notes regarding the subject in hand may be culled. Many of them have been cited in the footnotes to this essay. Of hitherto unpublished

16) Of this excellent quarterly one volume only appeared. (Cincinnati, 1886.) Its contents deal principally with the colonial and revolutionary periods.

17) Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856.

18) New York, DeWitt & Davenport, 1856.

manuscript material the writer has had the opportunity to use nothing except the letter of Carl Schurz which is found in footnote 90 to this essay. But in this connection attention should be called to the fact that with events and men so recent as those treated here there is a certain amount of knowledge to be gained from personal intercourse with those who have known those men personally. This sort of traditional knowledge is too vague to be trustworthy with regard to definite facts and dates. But it has some value for the purpose of obtaining a true notion of the general characteristics of men and events, and sometimes corrects inaccurate impressions apt to be received from written accounts. Of such traditional knowledge the writer has acquired a fair share and tried to make use of it in order to make his picture of the political refugees as true as possible; at the same time he has taken honest care not to let a personal bias be created thereby which might distort the historical perspective.

CHAPTER III.

BEFORE THE YEAR 1848.

The years following the overthrow of Napoleon are, for the people of Germany, a period to which they cannot look back with anything but dissatisfaction, so far as political life is concerned. The time of the foreign oppression had helped to revive the feeling of German nationality that had been almost choked to death under the crumbling rubbish heap of the Holy Roman Empire. The succeeding War of Liberation had given that national sentiment a tremendous impetus, and for a brief period the masses, especially in North Germany, had been raised to a height of enthusiasm and patriotic self-devotion such as

occurs but at long intervals in the history of any people. But as soon as Napoleon had been defeated and the French left the soil of the Fatherland a reaction began. The recollection of the Corsican despot began to retreat into the background of men's consciousness, and its place was taken by that of Robespierre and the Jacobins. A wave of reaction from the revolutionary fever swept throughout Europe, and both the governments and the masses in Germany felt its full force. Both had but one desire, tranquillity at any price. It was the era of the Holy Alliance, the purpose of which was to keep things in exactly the condition in which they were put by the Congress of Vienna.

The current Liberalism of Germany has been inclined to represent the matter as if this quietistic tendency had belonged to the governments only, and had been forcibly imposed upon the German people. But a slight acquaintance with the period must convince an unbiased student that the contrary is true. The great mass of the people were for a while entirely satisfied with the system of guardianship under which Prince Metternich, the leading statesman of the Holy Alliance, kept them. The truth was, the great majority of Germans were not interested in public affairs. They left those things to their Kings and Grand Dukes, and to the officials who were paid to attend to them. They themselves attended to their private affairs, or, if they were intellectually inclined, took a share in the grand philosophical, scientific and literary activity which in this as in the preceding generation absorbed the greater part of the best intellects. There was no public life, no speechmaking, no popular elections, hardly any political journalism. This was especially true of the two great absolute governments, Austria and Prussia,

hardly less so of the minor states, in which there existed various kinds of representative institutions of more or less antiquated pattern. The fact alone that most of those local Diets met behind closed doors, and newspaper reports of their proceedings were prohibited, made a true political life of the people impossible¹⁹.

Yet it was not to be expected that among a great and cultivated nation the seed of political liberty, which the French revolution had scattered broadcast over the world, should not meet some ardent souls in which it could find a congenial field. Nor was it strange that such receptive hearts were found especially among the educated youth. Among those men who had labored for the regeneration of Germany in the days of the French occupation, university professors had been conspicuous: Fichte, Luden, Fries, Oken. Some of these, after the War, formed a center of Liberalism at the University of Jena, where the Grand Duke Karl August, by far the noblest among the German princes of the time, gave them all the support it was in his power to give. Through the influence of these men and others of similar tendencies at other universities there sprang up among the students a movement for the improvement of the educated youth in their moral and intellectual lives, which crystallized itself in the organization of the students' society known as the "Deutsche Burschenschaft." This was not at its beginning; and never really became, properly a political movement. The declared objects were the fostering of high moral ideas, of patriotism and a truly scientific ("wissen-

schaftlich") spirit among its members. The atmosphere prevailing in it was that of an ardent, impracticable, somewhat vague enthusiasm, just such a spirit as one might expect among persons of the adolescent age. The comprehension of political affairs, among the great mass of these youths, was about as mature as that of an average American schoolboy.

Within this innocent organization, however, there was an unorganized nucleus of young men, among whom Karl Follenius (Charles Theodore Follen) and his brothers, Adolph and Paul, were the leading spirits, whose aim was more definitely political. They had no more practical understanding of politics than the rest. But while others were satisfied to dream about the ancient glories of the German race, sing patriotic songs and wear the absurd dress which the faddists of the hour called "alt-deutsch," this inner circle was anxious to do something to restore the former splendor of Germany. Their aims were as vague as possible. Some believed in a German republic; others wanted to restore the empire; some wanted to do away with the federal feature of the German constitution; more meant to preserve the federal principle, but desired to strengthen the central authority; all united in condemning the constitution of the German Confederacy, as it had come out of the hands of the Congress of Vienna, and in this sentiment at least they were entirely right. None of them had a clear conception of the means to bring about whatever political change they desired. Although a great deal has been written about these matters, our actual knowledge of the aim and acts of

¹⁹⁾ „Aber da war nirgends eine geschlossene Partei zu finden, da gab es keine Gesellschaft, Stände und Klassen, die die öffentliche Meinung zu öffentlicher Rede gebracht hätten; der Beamtenstand fürchtete und mied die Presse; der Adel arbeitete im Stillen für sich und seine Sonderzwecke, die das Licht des Tages scheuten; der Bürgerstand harrte in gewohntem Schweigen.“ Gervinus, Geschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, Band 2, p. 359.

this group of "Blacks," or "Absolutes," as they were called, is exceedingly vague, for the reason, undoubtedly, that there was nothing definite to record.

On the 18th of October, 1817, the Deutsche Burschenschaft met at the little town of Eisenach, hallowed by recollections of Martin Luther, to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Reformation. A part of the ceremonies was the kindling of a bonfire on an adjacent hill, opposite the historic Wartburg, where a number of speeches were made. These were of a religious and patriotic nature, but hardly contained a definite political allusion. When the official program was over, a number of students carried in a basket full of books. Their titles were read, and it appeared that they were writings considered unpatriotic by the students. With some more or less enthusiastic, but very far from incendiary speeches, these books were consigned to the flames. Among the students taking active parts in this burlesque auto-da-fe were Robert and William Wesselhoeft. Both of these were some years later forced into exile, the former after having been incarcerated a number of years for alleged seditious acts, and both became distinguished physicians in New England.

The German governments, and more particularly Prince Metternich, had for some time watched the doings of the Burschenschaft with a jealous eye. The incident of Eisenach intensified this sentiment, although for the time being nothing was done to suppress the movement. A vigorous feud between the Liberals and the supporters of the governments broke out, and for a while

pamphlets about the Eisenach celebration followed each other thick and fast. It is characteristic of the absurd nervousness of the Metternich government that these boyish pranks were considered dangerous to existing institutions. It is equally characteristic of the views at that time prevailing in Germany regarding popular participation in public affairs that even the great Stein, himself a distinguished reformer and a hero in the eyes of these very youths, bitterly condemned the doings of the Burschenschaft.

But it was an occurrence of far more serious character which brought about the persecutions that sent the first wave of political exiles from Germany to the United States. August von Kotzebue, a mediocre writer of great notoriety, one of whose plays (in its English version known as "The Stranger") was long immensely popular on all the stages of Europe, was by many people considered a spy of the Russian government. On March 23, 1819, he was stabbed to death, at his home in Mannheim, by Karl Sand, a student, a member of the Burschenschaft and a close friend of Karl Follen. The assassin was imbued with an almost insane enthusiasm, with a mystical religious zeal, and undoubtedly acted under a mistaken notion of patriotic duty. On the part of the Liberals there was a tendency to excuse his deed, and to sympathize with him personally²⁰. This crime was the occasion or pretext for severe measures of repression on the part of the Metternich government against what few traces of political interest there were among the German people. At a conference held in Carlsbad the representatives of the two great

²⁰) Varnhagen tells how, when the news of the murder became known, the populace at Mannheim made demonstrations in Sand's favor, and the murderer was even praised as a martyr, "especially by the numerous Englishmen and Englishwomen who were at Mannheim at the time." K. A. Varnhagen v. Ense, *Denkwürdigkeiten des eigenen Lebens*, vol. 6, p. 87.

powers, Austria and Prussia, agreed on a program which they forced upon the lesser states of the confederacy, much against the will of some of them. A severe censorship of the press was established, and a special commission, with ill-defined but very extensive powers, was established to investigate "demagogical intrigues" (demagogische Umtriebe). This commission, during ten years, harrassed and persecuted everybody suspected of liberal leanings, with an utter disregard of justice and even common sense, worthy of the most tyrannical days of the Russian "Third Section." Members of the Burschenschaft found themselves proscribed; youths of twenty who had never committed worse things than to sing bombastic songs about a mysterious abstraction they called Liberty, or wearing the tricolored ribbons of the Burschenschaft (black, red and gold), were kept in prison for years, often without ever being tried on specific charges. Men of high standing, who had been among the leaders in the popular rising of 1813, and had deserved well not only of their country, but of the sovereign princes who now persecuted them, men such as Jahn, Arndt, Goerres, fared no better than the students; even Stein the greatest and noblest of the German statesmen of the time, did not escape annoyance. As a result many of the ablest and best young men of the country were forced to seek safety in foreign lands. Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, and especially England, offered a more or less secure refuge to the exiles. Some of them, however, resolved to shake the dust of the old world from their feet, and thus the political refugee became for the first

time an element in the German immigration to the United States.

The men belonging to the class we have just described were few, compared to the hosts of refugees who came after the revolutionary movements of 1830 and 1848. They came, moreover, at a time when the immigrated German element was not yet of much importance in this country. As a consequence, these exiles very soon lost themselves in the native American population, entered fully into the American life, and exerted what influence they had on our history, not by virtue of being Germans, but of being able and worthy men. They are, therefore, hardly a part of our present subject, and perhaps all that is required in this place is to mention a few of those who afterwards rose to distinction.

Facile princeps of these, and perhaps of all Germans who ever lived in the United States, is *Francis Lieber*, whose work as a publicist is known to every student of American scholarship. Next to him comes *Karl Follen*, who arrived in Cambridge in 1825, to become professor of German in Harvard. He afterwards was a Unitarian minister, and a zealous anti-slavery orator. His friend *Karl Beck*, who came in the same vessel with him, also obtained a chair in Harvard University. The brothers *Wesselhoeft* have already been mentioned. *Friedrich List*, the political economist and advocate of protectionism, lived a number of years in Pennsylvania, after having been sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and pardoned. He afterwards was United States consul, first at Hamburg, afterwards at Leipsic, and never returned to America. Dr. *Edward Rivinus*²¹ became a distinguished physi-

21) Rivinus was the first to publish a quarterly magazine, such as afterwards became common, for the express purpose of acquainting Europeans with American affairs. An excellent sketch of this distinguished Philadelphian is found in Rattermann's *Deutsch.-Amerikanisches Magazin*, page 327.

cian and philanthropist at Philadelphia. *William Lehmann*, who had escaped from the fortress at Julich by the aid of the son of the commanding officer, whose tutor he was, became professor of ancient languages in the University of Georgia, but afterwards settled on a farm in Wisconsin. Many others with similar careers might be mentioned.

The indirect effects of measures for the repression of a popular movement are often of far greater importance than the direct ones, and, moreover, are apt to be of a character quite unexpected to the promoters. This happened in the case of Metternich and his persecution of "demagogues." The injustice done to so many of the best young men of the country led numbers who would otherwise have been content to live on without a thought of political affairs to become discontented. This was the case especially in the Southern states, Baden, Wurtemberg, Bavaria and Hesse-Darmstadt, where there were at least traces of participation in public affairs by the people. But although, during the third decade of the century, political dissatisfaction spread rapidly from the universities throughout the educated middle class, the Metternich system prevented all open manifestations, and to many minds all chance of improvement seemed cut off.

Under these circumstances not a few educated and well-to-do people began to cast their eyes across the Atlantic, in the hope that there they could find a country which was more in accord with their political aspirations than the Fatherland. Emigration to the United States had assumed very considerable proportions after the peace of 1815, largely on account of the business depression prevailing for a number of years. But this

class of emigrants, moved entirely by economic reasons, and recruited mostly from the poorer class of country people, does not particularly concern us at present²². The new political emigration, in contrast with the refugees proper of whom we have spoken above, did not readily disappear in the native population. They came in more or less closely organized groups and bodies, and almost always settled on the lands beyond the Alleghanies, very much like their poorer countrymen, although with far less prospect of making a success of their attempt at pioneering. The organizing of colonization societies is a characteristic of this period. Scores of them sprang up all over Germany. Many of them had no political object in view. Some of them had a strongly religious tinge. But some, and those are the only ones interesting us at present, were of a decidedly political character. They intended to be the nucleus of a new Germany in the Mississippi Valley. They wanted to form German states, which might or might not be parts of the North American Union, but in which the German nationality should be predominant, where German should be the language of business, school and government, where a purely German culture should flourish under the beneficent protection of free institutions such as these men despaired of ever seeing established in the Fatherland.

This dream of a German state or group of states haunted the imagination of many educated Germans for a generation. To us of the present day it seems an absurdity which at first appears to prove an utter lack of political insight in those who entertained it. But our latter-day wisdom largely comes from an experience which these German

²²) See *Locher, Geschichte und Zustände*, page 250 and *passim*.

dreamers necessarily lacked. They cannot be blamed for underestimating the assimilative capacity of the American people, and the solving force of American institutions. Americans themselves were very far from knowing their strength in this regard. When the number of Germans and other foreigners flocking to our shores increased to many thousands, year after year; when large districts were almost exclusively settled by Germans, in the manner in which large districts in New York, Pennsylvania and other colonies had been German a century before, not a few Americans began to fear that there was a danger of such German states springing up, and they had good excuse for their apprehensions. Next to their pardonable underestimate of American assimilative strength, these German patriots made their most serious mistake in imagining that by mere private enterprise, without the support of a strong home government, a German colony could be established, especially on territory which, though still unsettled, was nevertheless under the undisputed dominion of a strong and jealous government.

The plans, more or less thoroughly digested, which were usually proposed for accomplishing these projects, did not lack plausibility, especially to people in Germany who had no knowledge of local conditions. They were, in brief, the concentration of German immigrants in one or more of the Western states. The large measure of self-government which American political principles guaranteed to states and minor civil divisions was to be used to further these ends. After the Germans should have obtained a voting majority in a state, what constitutional power could prevent that major-

ity from making German the official language of its government, and otherwise remodeling its institutions to suit German notions? The bolder ones among these dreamers did not stop there. They would have the government of the United States itself bi-lingual, in the manner in which you may use either German or French in the Swiss Republic, or English or French in some parts of Canada; and if the Americans would not grant this—why, then the German states would secede and set up a national government of their own. Anyway, in Europe it was taken for granted, at that time, that the North American Union would sooner or later split up into a number of separate confederacies.

No support whatever was given to these ideas by government authority. The shadowy central government at Frankfurt never concerned itself about these affairs, except that early in its career it sanctioned the publication of a report by Baron Fuerstenwaerther, who had been sent by Herr v. Gagern, the representative of the Netherlands at the Bundesrath, to investigate the condition of German immigrants to the United States²³. The smaller states had no means to do anything; and the two great powers had no desire to engage in adventure across the sea. All the governments disliked emigration, and occasionally threw some slight obstacles in its way. In Prussia, the minister, v. Eichhorn, in 1845, proposed that it should be made the duty of Prussian consuls to see that emigrants settled in continuous bodies, and that the home government should aid in the establishment of German churches and schools²⁴. Nothing came of this proposal, and this is about the whole extent to which the

²³) Fuerstenwaerther, Moritz v. *Der Deutsche in Nord-Amerika*. Stuttgart and Tuebingen, Cotta 1818.

²⁴) See Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, V, page 492.

German governments concerned themselves with their expatriated citizens in the United States.

These desires for a German state were found exclusively among the educated minority. The great mass of the German immigrants never interested themselves in things of this sort. But a very large proportion of the educated Germans coming to this country, during the period before 1848, came distinctly with such objects in view.

Among the influences which led to this movement one of the most important ones was a little book by a young physician, Dr. Gottfried Duden, who had spent a few years in Montgomery County, now Warren County, Missouri ²⁵. It was written in a lively style, and presented such a rosy picture of the pleasures of pioneer life, of sport with rod and gun in the primeval woods and waters of the West, and of the glowing prospects of the settlers, that the imaginations of thousands of young and not a few middle-aged men were set rioting in dreams of Western adventure. The consequence was a large increase of emigration on the part of educated people, who were often possessed of considerable means, and were deeply dissatisfied with the social and political conditions of their homes. Dudens' influence was particularly strong in Southwest Germany and along the Rhine. It is very noticeable that most of the class of immigrants with which we are dealing came from these portions of the Fatherland. But there were, of course, other factors to bring about that circumstance. The most important of these was that nowhere was political dissatisfaction so strong and widely spread. This was not

because conditions were worse here than elsewhere in Germany, but because they were better. Here alone was there at least a semblance of popular participation in public affairs; consequently the interest of people in politics had been aroused, while in the North and East it was still slumbering.

The full strength of these influences upon immigration was not felt until the fourth decade of the century, but the preparatory stage was during the preceding ten years. During that period, from the Carlsbad Resolutions to the fall of the Bourbons in France, the Metternich system of tranquillity at any price seemed to be completely triumphant. But under the surface matters ripened towards a sudden change. The events of July, 1830, in Paris found an echo in Germany. There were riots in various places, and with surprising ease the governments of the small states of the North were prevailed on to change their mediæval constitutions into something more modern, and thereby come into line with the states of the South. Only the two great powers and the two Mecklenburgs still remained without popular representative bodies. From this time forth political agitation never ceased again in Germany. At the same time the opposition parties became more radical, especially in the Southwest, until at the end of the period with which we are dealing there was a strong party that would be content with nothing but an ultra-democratic republic. The governments soon became alarmed, and tried renewed measures of repression, with the usual result of increasing the strength of opposition. In 1832 the Burschenschaft, which had shown renewed activity for

²⁵) Gottfried Duden, *Bericht über eine Reise nach den westlichen Staaten Nord-Amerika's und einen mehrjährigen Aufenthalt am Missouri (in den Jahren 1824, 1825, 1826 und 1827) in Bezug auf Auswanderung und Uebervölkerung*. Elberfeld, 1829. 2nd edition, Cotta 1818.

some years past, openly declared in favor of bringing about the liberty and unity of Germany by revolution. On May 27, 1832, a mass meeting, in which 25,000 men are said to have participated, was held at Hambach, and speeches of a pronouncedly radical character were made. The year following, a conspiracy to revolutionize the country was discovered in Stuttgart, at the head of which stood a lieutenant in the army, Ernst Ludwig Koseritz, who had succeeded in winning many of his fellow officers to his projects²⁶. About the same time a mob captured the guardhouse at Frankfurt, only to be dispersed by the federal garrison. The immediate result of these and similar ill-devised risings was that the prisons and fortresses were again filled with political convicts and suspects, and a new wave of refugees was thrown across the Atlantic. These were the conditions under which numbers of political malcontents organized those colonization societies to help in founding in the Far West a new Germany, which was to enjoy those blessings of liberty that were lacking in the old country. Of all these societies, the best known, and, perhaps, the most important, and certainly the one with the most pronounced political character, is the "Giesener Auswanderungs-Gesellschaft." It was organized, originally, by a number of university men at Giessen, among whom Prof. Vogt was conspicuous, the father of Karl Vogt, who afterwards became famous as a scientist at Geneva.

Another leading member was Paul Follen, a younger brother of the Karl Follen whom we mentioned above. In the prospectus issued in 1833, the objects of the association were stated to be: "The founding of a German state, which would, of course, have to be a member of the United States, but with maintenance of a form of government which will assure the continuance of German custom, German language, and create a genuine, free and popular (*volksthüemliches*) life." The intention was to occupy an unsettled and unorganized territory, "in order that a German republic, a rejuvenated Germany, may arise in North America"²⁷. The members of the society were recruited from the very best elements of the German people. They were all possessed of some means. Many of them held high rank in official and professional life. The emigrants sailed from Bremen to New Orleans in two vessels. Their original intention was to settle in Arkansas. But no sooner had they landed when they split up. Instead of settling in a body, they followed the example of practically all other immigrants. Each selected for himself a new home where it seemed best to him. Few went to Arkansas. Many went to Missouri, and particularly to the neighborhood of Duden's farm—now abandoned²⁸. Others settled in Illinois, especially near Belleville. Still others scattered throughout the West and Southwest. Paul Follen, the leader, bought land in Warren County, Mis-

26) Koseritz was sentenced to death but pardoned on condition of leaving his country. He came to Philadelphia. On his further career, and his service in the Seminole war, see Koerner, *Das Deutsche Element*, page 64.

27) See „Aufforderung und Erklärung in Betreff einer Auswanderung im Grossen aus Deutschland in die Nord-Amerikanischen Freistaaten." Giessen, 1833. Also Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 300. *Locher, Op. cit.*, *passim*.

28) On early German settlers in Missouri, see Bryan & Rose, *Pioneer Families of Missouri*, page 450 and *passim*. But these compilers are not always accurate, especially as to the spelling of German names.

souri. But after a few years of pioneering he moved to St. Louis to become the editor and publisher of a German paper, "*Die Wage*." Soon after he died. Among the members of the Giessen association none has risen to higher esteem in his new home than Friedrich Muench. He had been the pastor of a Protestant country parish in Hesse, as his father had been before him. He settled in Warren County, and was one of the few of these educated pioneers who made a success of farming. On this place he lived until his death, but during all that time he was a fertile contributor to numbers of periodicals, both German and English, as well as the author of a number of books. His writings are on a very wide range of subjects, from a little volume on "Religion, Christianity, Orthodoxy and Rationalism," which was printed at Boston in 1847, to a "School of Grape Vine Culture." In addition, he was an active politician and stump speaker, being a delegate to the Chicago National Republican convention of 1860, and a member of the state senate from 1861-1865²⁹.

The fate of this best-organized of the emigration societies was shared by practically all the others, except some which were held together by strong religious ties. As soon as the members stepped ashore, they discovered that they could serve their individual interests better by each shifting for himself, and this personal interest proved stronger than any patriotic motive³⁰. Among the other societies of this kind some of the more important are the "Muehlhæuser Gesellschaft," with which Roebing, of Brook-

lyn Bridge fame, came over in 1831; The "Rheinbayerische Gesellschaft," with Dr. Geiger as their leader, in 1833. An interesting experiment was that of the "Forty" in Texas, a colony of enthusiastic youths which reminds one of the dreams of the "Pantisocrats," with which Southey, Coleridge and other literary Englishmen at one time busied themselves. Among these young men was Gustave Schleicher, afterwards a prominent member of Congress. The dramatic history of the "Mainzer Adelsverein" and its settlements in Texas is important enough to deserve separate treatment, and, therefore, shall be only mentioned here. Besides, most of its work was done before Texas became part of the United States³¹.

While nothing whatever was accomplished in the direction of their patriotic dreams by the immigrants of this class, their coming had a very considerable effect on the American people. For the first time in the history of immigration since the days of the Puritans and other victims of religious intolerance, was there among the hosts of newcomers a large number of men of superior social and educational standing, who came not simply to better their economic condition or seek their fortunes, but had in view greater and, at least in a degree, unselfish ends. Although the plan of settling in continuous bodies never came to anything there were usually more or less numerous groups of this class of immigrants who made their homes closely together. Almost all of them at first tried the experiment of taking up land and becoming farmers, under the sway

29) Koerner, Op. cit., page 301.

30) On this failure of colonization societies, see Friedrich Muench, in "*Schnellpost*", December 1847, reprinted in "*Deutsche Pionier*", IV., page 362.

31) See, inter alia, Kapp, *Geschichte der deutschen Einwanderung in West Texas*, Atlantische Studien, IV.; Meyer's *Monatshefte*, IV., page 150.

of somewhat fanciful ideas of the nobleness of a life as "free men on their own freeholds." Thus sprang up the numerous colonies of educated Germans in various parts of the West, which were quite a conspicuous feature of the period. These became widely known among the German population as "Latin Settlements," while the men who composed them were nicknamed "Latin Farmers."

These Latin Settlements have played a part in bringing about a higher standard of civilization in the states of the Mississippi Valley, which will be appreciated at its true worth when the history of the culture development of that section comes to be written. As farmers, most of the "Latins" were not successes. They could not be. The physical power and endurance needed by him who wants to make a farm out of a wilderness were not possessed by many of them; more important than that, they had intellectual and moral wants that could not be satisfied by the narrow and barren life of the pioneer. So, to most of them, their experiment was a losing venture as far as their personal fortunes were concerned. Most of them sooner or later abandoned their farms and went to the cities to find more suitable occupations. In the meantime, the weaker among them had become broken in mind as well as in body by the hardships they had endured, but to most the period of their farm life was just the training they needed to strengthen and harden them, physically and morally, and make them men in every fiber. The strongest of all, like Friedrich Muench, held out during the long years of pioneer struggles, to have their reward by finally seeing a young and flourishing civilization spring

up around them, to rise to pecuniary independence, and to become honored and influential in their communities. But during all this time the Latin Settlements were centers of light, from which higher ideals of life than were customary among the ordinary settlers spread among wide portions of the country. Especially in educational matters, these men set the standard, not only for their German countrymen, but for their American neighbors. How well they held up the torch of a higher intellectual life even amidst the materialism and crudeness of frontier conditions is aptly illustrated by the growth of what is now the Public Library of the city of Belleville, in Illinois. This grew out of a library established by the Latin farmers of the neighborhood in 1836. It is characteristic of the objects these founders had in view that the first book purchased by them was not some light literature to entertain an idle hour, but a set of Sparks' Life of George Washington³². A graphic description of a similar settlement of educated Germans in Texas, at a somewhat later period, is given by Frederick Law Olmsted³³. On the causes which prevented most of the "Latins" from being successful in their experiment at frontier farming, Friedrich Muench has written clearly and sensibly³⁴.

It would be as superfluous as it is impossible to enumerate all the settlements of this class which grew up and flourished for a while in the states of the Middle West and the Southwest. But a few of the best known may be mentioned. The oldest of which I have any knowledge was that at Germantown, Ohio, which was founded before 1830.

32) Henry Raab, Origin of the Belleville Public Library, in 17th Annual Report of Board of Directors, Belleville Public Library, 1900.

33) Frederick Law Olmsted, A Journey through Texas, page 430.

34) Deutsche Pionier, IV., page 231.

It became a great free-soil and abolition center, and a famous station on the "underground railway." Portions of Missouri, especially Warren, Montgomery and Gasconade counties, had many of them. Illinois had the well known settlement in St. Clair county. In Ohio, besides the Germantown settlement, there was one in the neighborhood of Cleveland, where pretty nearly all of the Germans of the older generation who afterwards rose to professional or political prominence in that city spent the first few years of their life in this country.³⁵

The class of immigrants we have here described belong to the political exiles in the sense that the principal motive of their expatriating themselves was dissatisfaction with the political conditions prevailing at home, and to a certain extent in that they had more or less vague political objects in view, when they came here. But the revival of political agitation and consequent persecution in Germany, after the July revolution in France, caused the arrival of a large number of political refugees in the restricted sense, that is men who were either in danger of punishment for political offenses, or had been convicted of such offenses and pardoned, as was a common practice, on condition of leaving the country.

The refugees during the period with which we are now dealing were not only a good deal more numerous than their forerunners during the preceding decade, but they found on their arrival a very different condition of things. In the days when Lieber and Follen came to the United States, there was in this country no strong element of immigrated Germans. The native-born of German descent, who in parts of Pennsylvania

and other states still retained much of their distinctive nationality, had yet lost touch with the life of the old country, and the exiles found no readier, if so ready, a reception among them than among Americans of British extraction. But even at that period a new immigration had begun, and by the middle of the fourth decade there was present a strong body of Germans, many of whom had by that time been in the country sufficiently long to have obtained a measure of wealth and influence. Yet these were still recent enough arrivals to have vivid recollections of the old home, and consequently to sympathize with the aspirations of its people. At the same time, the more intelligent among them had learned in this country to take an interest in public affairs and to know and believe in free institutions. It is but natural, therefore, that their sympathies should be on the side of the Liberals as against the governments of the old country. Under these circumstances the exiles found a warm reception, and in the cases of many, who had been prominent at home, even an enthusiastic and demonstrative welcome.

The fugitives were mostly poor, in contrast to the "Latin farmers," who were usually men of some means. However much many of them may have shared in the fanciful inclinations towards an idyllic country life, few of them could realize these wishes. Of necessity they congregated in the cities, where they could hope to find some occupation that would afford them a livelihood. Soon New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, as well as the centers of German life in the West, particularly Cincinnati and St. Louis, each had its little colony of political exiles. If these men were poor in the goods of this

³⁵) See Koerner, Op. cit., page 229.

world, they were brimful of enthusiasm and of ideas, more or less crude, and more or less capable of maturing into something valuable. Naturally, these ideas and enthusiasms sought an outlet, and for a majority of the exiles the easiest road to this end seemed journalism.

Consequently a sudden and considerable increase in the number of German papers in the United States dates from this period.

German newspapers in the United States were not a new thing. They had flourished in colonial times, especially in Pennsylvania, and not a few of them still survived, the most important of which was the "Reading Adler." But many of the older papers were written in the "Pennsylvania Dutch" jargon, rather than in German, and all were entirely out of touch with the German life of the time—either that of the old country or that of the newly immigrated element. A change in this regard was brought about largely through the influence of the political refugees and those whose sentiments agreed with theirs.

One of the most important of the new journals was founded by Johann Georg Wesselhoeft in Philadelphia, in 1834, and called "Alte und Neue Welt." This man was a cousin of the New England physicians of that name, mentioned above. He combined with his newspaper business a book store, and was one of the first to import into this country the works of the modern popular writers of Germany. Another important one of the new papers was "Die Schnellpost" of New York, edited by Wm. von Eichthal. These two publications were rather more like semi-literary weeklies than newspapers proper. Of the latter kind the most important founded during this period were the New York "Staatszei-

tung" (founded 1834); the Cincinnati "Volksblatt" (founded 1836), and the St. Louis "Anzeiger des Westens" (founded 1835). There were, of course, a great many other newspapers started, many of ephemeral life, others of purely local interest. The better class of the new papers were almost without exception written and edited by political exiles or their partisans. It followed necessarily that the men who contributed to these journals became drawn into the public affairs of their new homes, and gradually many of them became leaders of their countrymen in political matters.

This leadership, however, was not attained without considerable difficulties and some hard struggles. In the first place, each of these men had to pass through that period of transition which every immigrant has to pass through before he feels fairly at home in his new surroundings. During this period, and before they had acquired an adequate knowledge of existing conditions, the dreams about purely German states, which were described in connection with the Giessen Emigration Society, were apt to prove particularly alluring. Accordingly, the columns of the German papers, at this time, are filled with discussion about these plans. "Alte und Neue Welt," particularly, might almost be called, during a number of years, the organ of this movement. Other papers, in the hands of more experienced men, threw cold water over the heads of the enthusiasts, who were apt to revenge themselves by calling their well-meaning monitors "traitors to the German cause," and charging them with being bought by the politicians.³⁶

For the latter accusation there was occasionally no lack of plausible evidence. About this time the new Ger-

³⁶) See, besides files of newspapers, Loehner, *Op. cit.*, *passim*; Koerner, *Op. cit.*, *passim*. Deutsche Pionier, *passim*.

man element, growing rapidly, as it did, in numbers, began to be of political importance in those parts of the country where it was numerous. It should be observed, that up to this time the masses of the German population were exceedingly indifferent towards politics. Not being accustomed to any sort of participation in public affairs in their old homes, being, moreover, poor and engrossed in the struggle for their economic existence, they were content to leave politics to the "Yankees." Many did not even take the trouble to become naturalized; others voted without understanding what they were doing—the veriest voting cattle. This condition of things was a constant source of indignation to the refugees and other educated new-comers. They never tired of attempting to arouse the masses of their countrymen from this indifference, and in the course of a few years had considerable success in this direction.³⁷

The indifference of the masses, however, was not the only difficulty in the path of refugees who aspired to become political leaders of their countrymen. They had to reckon also with the opposition of those among the older Germans in the country who had risen to affluence and position. This class was comparatively numerous in the cities of the seaboard, especially New York, Baltimore and New Orleans. Here it was composed largely of wealthy importing merchants, together with a sprinkling of professional men. A similar, though smaller, class of Germans existed also in such places as Cincinnati and St. Louis. Until the political immigrants of the "Thir-

ties" became conspicuous, this class had held aloof from the mass of the Germans in a sort of aristocratic exclusiveness.³⁸ But when the new-comers began their work of educating the masses and especially arousing them to an assertion of their political rights, the "swells" (*Geschwollenen*); as German-American slang dubbed them, on their part also began to take an interest in the laborers, artisans and small shopkeepers who constituted the greater portion of the German elements in the cities. For the "swells" were Whigs, while the political immigrants, in an overwhelming majority, became Jacksonian Democrats as soon as they had somewhat familiarized themselves with the political life of the country. For a while, there was a sharp struggle for the loyalty of the German voters. The outcome could hardly be other than it was, for reasons which will be treated more at length below. The Democrats gained a sweeping victory, and all but a small percentage of German voters remained true to them, from now until the advent of the Republican party.

Among the incidents of this brief struggle by the political parties for the adherence of the German voters a notable one is a series of meetings held during the summer of 1834 in the city of New York. A meeting attended largely by recently arrived "Politicals" took place in Tammany Hall, in which strong support was given to the Democracy in the state and municipal campaign then pending. Soon after, on August 3, a German meeting was held at Masonic Hall, at which F. J. Grund, of whom more will be said below, was the princi-

37) Loehner, Op. cit., passim.

38) Rattermann, speaking more particularly of New Orleans, says: „Das geistige Deutschthum verkehrte hier fast gar nicht mit den Massen, die zumeist in einer Vorstadt lebten. Die Spitzen des Geistes, Oberrichter Rost, Richter Rosellus, der berühmte Arzt Luetzenburg, sowie die hauptsächlichsten Grosskaufleute, verkehrten mit dem französisch-englischen Element. Erst in den vierziger Jahren wurde diese Kluft überbrückt." *Deutsch-Amer. Magazin*, vol. 1, page 3.

pal speaker. Resolutions were passed in which the word "Whig" was not mentioned. But the action of the Tammany Hall meeting was condemned, "because it tended to separate the Germans from the rest of the community, because it endorsed principles that did not serve the common weal, and because it was largely composed of men too brief a time in this country to understand the vital questions of politics."

This was clearly a gauntlet thrown into the arena by the Whig element, and the Democrats were not slow to take it up. On October 27, another meeting of Germans was held at Tammany Hall, at which 3,000 people are said to have attended. Speeches were made by John A. Stemmler, F. W. Lassack and other men of local note, and an address was adopted, in which the Germans were exhorted to unite, to exert the influence to which their nationality was entitled, and to support as vigorously as possible the principles of the Democratic party. At the election held a few days later the Democrats carried the city by barely 1,800 votes, and as the great majority of the Germans had been on their side, these fairly claimed the honors of the victory.³⁹

In these meetings, refugees had been conspicuous. They were still more so in the organization of the "Germania" society, on January 24, 1835. The objects of this association were thus stated in its printed constitution: "To unite more closely the Germans living in the United States, in order to maintain and promote a vigorous German character, good German customs and German culture; to support the principles of a pure Democracy in the new home; nourish love and

attachment for the old country, and to work towards the end that as soon as possible better conditions be brought about in Germany also, similar to those enjoyed in the United States; and to support, with counsel and deed, German political refugees.⁴⁰ The practical work of this association was largely confined to agitating the concentration of the German element and the state project. Of course there were no better results than were had by other chasers of this rainbow.

In other centers of the German element, as well as in New York, there was a brief struggle, before the Democrats succeeded in capturing practically the whole German vote. In Cincinnati, vigorous efforts were made to establish a German Whig paper, to compete with the Democratic "Volksblatt." It is said⁴¹ that the early Germans in Ohio and Indiana, during the "era of good feeling," had been very largely followers of Henry Clay. The "bargain and corruption" cry, after the election of President Adams, turned them towards Jackson, who received their support in 1828. But when the Whig party arose, this element gave it very largely its adherence, until the power of these "old settlers" was superseded by the new activity of the German masses under the leadership of the refugees. In Cincinnati, the struggle took the shape of an agitation for the teaching of German in the public schools, to which the Whigs were opposed, while the Democrats favored it. The course of this struggle is not within the limits of the present work, except perhaps to the extent of saying that among the prominent participants were such political refugees as Henry Roed-

³⁹) Besides newspaper files, see Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 107.

⁴⁰) The original is in German. See Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 108. *Deutsche Pionier*, IV., page 83.

⁴¹) *Deutsche Pionier*, *passim*.

ter, who had been one of the organizers of the "Hambacher Fest," and Chas. G. Reemelin, who was one of those emigrating under Duden's influence.

Similarly, but brief mention can be made of the conflicts between the German element and the nativistic agitation which became somewhat vigorous about the middle of the fourth decade. It is difficult to say whether this movement was a result of the new political importance of the Germans; or whether conversely the efforts of the refugees to arouse a greater interest in public affairs among their countrymen were facilitated by nativist aggressions. Probably both was the case. The nativist hostility was not, of course, directed against the political exiles in particular, but against all manifestations of German national spirit which seemed to be adverse to the claims of American national sentiment. The masses of the German element were most directly touched, not by the political restrictions which nativists desired to place upon them, but by attacks on their modes of living. About this time assaults on German picnickers by bands of roughs began to be common, and at the same time the English-speaking churches commenced to be alarmed at German notions of Sunday-keeping. We will be obliged to recur to these matters in the next chapter, but their detailed treatment belongs to the history of the nativist movement rather than to that of the political exiles.

When it is said that the masses of the German element were first roused to an interest in public affairs by the political refugees who came from Germany after the abortive revolutionary attempts of the early "Thirties," it must not be understood that many of this class became conspicuous as partisan politicians, even locally. The truth was that few of these men were fitted to do the work of cau-

cuses and conventions and of "bringing out the vote." But they supplied the intellectual weapons by their journalistic work, and by the organization of various societies, which had no direct connection with party politics, but in which the German artisans and shopkeepers for the first time had an opportunity to learn how to act in concert with others, and where their minds were directed to matters outside of the narrow routine of their daily lives. The actual local party work was usually done by men of an entirely different type, who were sprung from the masses themselves, and were in far closer touch with them than the educated refugees. These "hustlers" and "heelers," of course, expected to be, and were, rewarded for their work by appointment to petty offices. The only way in which the educated refugees could hope to find partisan reward, at this time, was by having their newspapers subsidized. Such subsidies were usually a matter of life or death for the struggling concerns. But a newspaper receiving financial support from a political party was, of course, bound hand and foot to the interests of its supporters. Such a paper could hardly afford to advocate plans like the German State project, which no American politician, whether Democrat or Whig, could possibly countenance. Here is the modicum of plausibility in the charges sometimes made by the German State dreamers, that papers like the New York Staatszeitung or the Anzeiger des Westens, which opposed their plans, were bought by the politicians. But it must not be forgotten that a few years' residence in this country usually sufficed to show an intelligent man the futility of these projects. The German State idea was essentially a greenhorn's scheme.

There were some, however, among the educated Germans who even in this early

period rose to some degree of prominence in party politics. Such were, for instance, Chas. G. Reemelin and Peter Kaufmann in Ohio; Dr. Brunk of Buffalo, and especially F. J. Grund, of Pennsylvania.⁴² Most of these were very respectable, patriotic men of moderate abilities. Grund was far superior to them in point of talent, but unfortunately an utterly unprincipled soldier of fortune, who was ready to change his party allegiance at a moment's notice, if he could see a personal advantage in doing so. Starting as a Whig, he soon became a Jacksonian, and during Van Buren's first presidential campaign issued a German biography of the Democratic candidate, whose German descent he emphasized. An appointment as consul to Antwerp was his reward, but he was dissatisfied and in 1840 was a Whig once more. A campaign biography of Gen. Harrison was his contribution to the party cause, in which his idol of four years ago was ridiculed as a "Hollander," no longer a German. When after Harrison's death President Tyler entered the Democratic camp, Grund followed him, and this time actually remained a Democrat until after the outbreak of the civil war. Under Buchanan he was consul at Havre. In September, 1863, he unexpectedly appeared in the Union League Club, at Philadelphia, and delivered an enthusiastic Republican speech. His sudden conversion caused quite a sensation among his former party associates, though they were hardly as bitter as he seems to have imagined. A few days later there happened to be a crowd of people in front of his house, making a good deal of noise. Grund, whether from excessive vanity or evil conscience, imagined that a mob of Democrats was about to lynch him. In hot

haste he ran through the back door to the police station, to get help. Hardly had he made known his errand, when he sank to the floor, and died within a few minutes of a stroke of apoplexy.⁴³

To understand why it was that for twenty years and more the great mass of Germans, as of other foreigners, were stout adherents of the Democracy, it is but necessary to consider the principles and tendencies of that party and those of its Whig opposition, and especially to compare the elements of which each was mainly composed. It may be said that one of the foundations on which the Whig organization rested was a strong sense of American nationality. The Whig, whether he reasoned it out or not, was a man who believed that the American people was distinct from all others as an organism with an individuality of its own, and he was proud of the fact. He disliked, instinctively, anything which might tend to efface the self-contained character of this national individuality. Therefore he was apt to look with disfavor on the foreign element, and was inclined to either throw obstacles into the way of its growth or else force it into a more speedy amalgamation with the American people, provided, the foreigners would simply become Americans of the traditional kind, without modifying the popular type by contributing some of their own characteristics. The nativist movement was nothing but the radical expression of tendencies strongly existing within the Whig party.

In the Democracy, on the other hand, the consciousness of national individuality was far less strong, and the force of "Jeffersonian" ideas about the equality of all men, with their strongly cosmopolitan tinge, much stronger. Where the

⁴²) For biographical data regarding these men, see Koerner, *Op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁴³) Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 59; newspapers of the day.

Whig looked askance at the immigrant, the Democrat welcomed him and facilitated his progress. The Jeffersonian jargon about liberty, equality and the rights of the people was as apt to flow from the lips of the Whig as from that of the Democrat, but the latter's acts seemed more often in accord with the glittering phrase.

Another important characteristic of the Whig party was that its economic principles were, on the whole, those finding special favor among the wealthier classes. The merchant, the manufacturer, the banker, the land-speculator was most likely a Whig; the Democrats claimed to favor, and to a great extent really did favor, more particularly the interests of the workingman, the small farmer and the settler in the West. There was a certain amount of truth at the bottom of the exaggerated charges by the Jacksonians, that the Whigs were an aristocratic party, and that the Democrats alone were the party of the people and the upholders of true American principles, as laid down in the Declaration of Independence.

The immigrant was generally poor; he would naturally be drawn toward the party which claimed to be the special champion of the common people against the encroachment of the wealthy. If, in addition, that party took his side when the other party attempted to restrain him in following customs he had learned in his old home, or refused to give him equal political rights with the native citizen, was it not natural that the Democracy was the party for him?

While such were undoubtedly the motives of the masses, the educated German, and particularly the political refugee, had additional reasons for feeling drawn towards Jacksonianism. The doctrines of Thomas Jefferson were on the whole identical with those for which he had

fought and suffered in Europe. His highest social and political ideals, like Jefferson's, were "Liberty and Equality." He was very apt to identify the Whigs with the aristocracies of European countries; for during many years after his arrival in this country he had the habit of measuring everything with European standards, and he could hardly conceive of political parties except as the respective champions of aristocratic, which he called reactionary, and democratic, which to him were necessarily progressive, principles. Under these circumstances the educated Germans were, like their more ignorant brethren, apt to be Jacksonians, unless like the old settlers of 1835, they had become well-to-do and Americanized before the German immigrant had become an appreciable factor in American life.

This inclination towards the Democratic party continued until the Democracy of the Northern states had changed its nature and become merely the humble retainer of the Southern plantation aristocracy. Even then a very large proportion of the masses as well as of the leaders continued to act with the old party that had stood by the foreigners in their early struggles against the nativists and their Whig sympathizers. The first break in the allegiance of the Germans to the party of Jackson is almost synchronous with the appearance on the scene of the third and largest wave of political exiles thrown across the Atlantic, after the year 1848. But before we enter on the treatment of the period dating thence, there should be a few words on some common characteristics of the exiles of this earlier epoch, who were in a number of respects quite different from their successors.

The generation of young Germans which first felt the heavy hand of the Metternich system stood under the in-

fluence of three intellectual currents, which were in many respects flowing in different directions, and thereby added not a little to the confusion natural enough in the heads of these youthful and inexperienced politicians. The first of these were the reminiscences of the French Revolution, not so much the Revolution of Robespierre and Marat, as that of 1789, with its optimistic enthusiasm for humanity, in other words, its Jeffersonian doctrines. The second great factor in their intellectual make-up was the philosophy of Kant, modified and applied to practical life by Fichte. This contributed to their enthusiasm for liberty an austere moral rigorism. The third great stream of ideas was that many-colored, multi-colored body of beliefs, fancies and notions, called Romanticism. From those interesting, though turbid, waters Liberals and Governmentals, the Enlightened and the Obscurantists drank alike, each selecting for himself what seemed good to him out of the variety of its ingredients. From this source the "Burschenschaftler" drew especially their fervent love of nationality, their admiration for the past glories of the German race. Such influences combined to make these youths austere moral, fervently patriotic, and imbued them with an idealism that cared little for actual conditions, but was quite willing to reconstruct the world anew according to a preconceived notion. They were just the material out of which political and religious radicals could be made. But they were not yet radicals. In politics, so far as they had definite notions, a constitutional emperor, decked out with much romantic tinsel, seemed to most of them the ideal form of government for Germany. In religion, they considered themselves rather orthodox, especially as compared to the shallow rationalism of the preceding generation.

To be sure, their type of orthodoxy was quite different from the narrow and, in plain terms, ignorant orthodoxy then widely prevailing in the United States. But they were certainly very far from being "infidels" or "atheists," like their successors of 1848. Many of them were preparing for the ministry, or had already entered on its functions. Among the exiles to the United States, not a few, like Follen, became ministers of the gospel.

Such were the men of 1820. During the following decade, the philosophy of Hegel held undisputed sway over the minds of all educated Germans. It was a doctrine which, like Romanticism, could supply nourishment to the most opposite tendencies. By the time the second wave of refugees came to America, the school of Hegel had produced an offshoot calling itself the Young Hegelians, which drew from the principles of the master inferences of the most radical nature, in politics as well as in religion, while Hegel himself, especially in his later days, was decidedly conservative. However, the wide prevalence of this school of thought came somewhat later. The exiles of the "thirties" were still believers in Christianity; they supported churches, although of a decidedly liberal type. Their main difference from the older refugees was the absence of fervent nationalism, which was replaced by a cosmopolitan sentiment similar to that so common before the Napoleonic invasion. At the Wartburg-Fest, in 1817, hatred of the French had been as pronounced as love of the Fatherland. At the Hambacher Fest, in 1832, speeches by Frenchmen and Poles were as enthusiastically applauded as those by Germans. This theoretical cosmopolitanism, however, did not prevent the new-comers from attempting, in the United States, the maintenance of a sep-

arate national existence for their countrymen, while their predecessors, with all their love for a romantic Teutonism, had disappeared with comparative ease in the general life of the American people. The same contradiction between theoretical ideas and practical activity will be found in the men of 1848, who were even more international and cosmopolitan in their opinions.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FORTY-EIGHTERS.

Large as was the number of those who had to go into exile after the revolutionary movements following the overthrow of the Bourbons in France, it was insignificant compared to the hosts of refugees who flocked to the asylums given them in Switzerland, England and the United States during the period of reaction after the violent commotions of 1848. At first a comparatively small number of them crossed the Atlantic; for London, where most of them were congregated after all kinds of vicissitudes, was nearer to their homes, and they all hoped for a speedy return, when new revolutions were to overthrow finally the "despotic" rule of kings and emperors. Gradually, as these hopes vanished, more and more of them discovered that it would be easier for them to make a living in the United States than in London, and by the year 1853 a very large number had followed in the steps of those who from the start had pitched their tents in America.

In order to comprehend what part these "Forty-Eighters" (Achtundvierziger), as they soon came to be called, played in the history of the United States, it will be necessary to consider what they had stood for in Germany and what manner of men they were. We had occasion to remark in the preceding chapter, how the opposition to the Metternich system of repressing all popular activity in politics became

gradually more radical. By the year 1848, a very large portion of those classes which took an interest in public matters at all had become imbued with ultra-democratic notions. They believed in the republican form of government as the only one fit for civilized society. All monarchies, no matter how strictly limited, were merely forms of oppression. All kings and princes were enemies of mankind. An enthusiastic belief in "Liberty" was, with most of them, coupled with fanatical intolerance of all who disagreed with them. The strength of their convictions was usually proportionate to their inexperience of the actual business of government. Of this inexperience there was a most remarkable amount in the ranks of these reformers. Naturally the men who were practically acquainted with such matters were not to be found among them, for radical or even pronounced liberal opinions were not favorable to a man's rising very high in an official career under the Metternich system. The great majority of the radical leaders were literary men, journalists, advocates, physicians. Their following came almost exclusively from the small tradesmen and workingmen of the cities. The wealthier commercial classes, as well as large numbers of the professional and official class, were mostly adherents of a moderate Liberalism and believed in a constitutional monarchy. Instead of a German Republic, the aim of the Radicals, the Liberals desired a Germany united under the sway of an emperor, with an imperial parliament to represent the people. The country population, both squire and peasant, were as a class the staunchest of conservatives.

Such being the ranks of society from which the Radicals mostly came, it must be mentioned in addition that they were mostly young men; and a third circumstance important to remember is that Radicalism had its chief strength in the Southern portions of Germany, and along

the Rhine. Elsewhere, it was on the whole confined to the large cities, such as Berlin, Dresden and Breslau. In the Parliament, which met at Frankfurt early in the summer of 1848, to deliberate on a constitution for a united Germany, these Radicals formed the "Democratic Left." But a large portion of them expected no good results from the work of an assembly in which the moderate Liberals had a majority. Even before the Parliament met, the Democrats of the Palatinate and Baden, under the leadership of Friedrich Hecker, had attempted to establish the Republic by force of arms.⁴⁴ This attempt was repeated by other leaders (Struve, Brentano, Sigel, etc.) in the autumn of the same year, and in 1849. When the governments, recovering from the paralysis of the spring and summer of 1848, finally restored their ascendancy, it was principally the Democrats who felt their heavy hand. Nearly all of this party had been guilty of insurrection. It was no longer necessary to resort to the tricks of Metternich's special commission, which in the days of the *Burschenschaft* had twisted the most innocent expressions into evidence of treasonable plots. Now the proofs of overt acts of treason and sedition were as open as daylight, and the regular courts vied with courts-martial in executing and imprisoning those of the insurgents and their too open sympathizers who fell into their hands. In addition to the Baden insurrections, which assumed dimensions of warfare, there had been numerous riots and barricade fights in almost every city of any importance, and everybody who had been in any way concerned in these felt his liberty and life in danger. Consequently, thousands of refugees soon crowded into Switzerland,

France, England and the United States, and soon "colonies" of refugees were found in all the principal cities of these countries. To the German exiles were added numbers of Italians, Poles, Hungarians; and after France had fallen at the feet of Louis Napoleon, French refugees were added to the list. For a number of years these exiles were firmly convinced that within a short time renewed revolutions would call them back in triumph. For this purpose they labored incessantly though with woefully inadequate means. Nearly all of the exiles were poor, sometimes penniless, when they arrived in the place that offered them safety. Those who had left property behind, often found that their fortunes were sequestered or confiscated, while proceedings *in contumaciam* were instituted against the owners. Very few among the refugees knew a handicraft, although an occasional printer or engraver was found among their number. The university training nearly all had received fitted them for few things by which a livelihood could be gained in a strange land. Consequently there was much acute distress in all the refugee colonies. Many of the exiles had families dependent upon them, and the suffering of devoted wives, who in many cases shared to the full the enthusiasm of their husbands and their loyalty to principle, must not be forgotten when the story of these struggles for the political freedom of the European continent is written. There was much bitter misery patiently endured, much heroic constancy exhibited with modest dignity. A surprisingly large number of these men in later years reached honor and influence either in their native land or in the new country, which from a place of exile had

⁴⁴) The still earlier mob violence at Berlin, Vienna and elsewhere, by which the revolutionists gained their temporary ascendancy (March 1848) can hardly be said to have been the work of the Democrats. These movements were really as spontaneous uprisings of the people as such movements ever are, and those who principally benefitted from them were the Liberals.

at last become a second home to them. Many of them confessed that the trials of their early years in exile contributed not the least part to the strengthening and moulding of their minds and characters.

In the published letters and memoirs of the refugees comparatively little of this nobler side of their lives appears. In the personal records of the Germans, especially, there is surprisingly little self-glorification, while their Italian fellow-sufferers, true to the difference in national characters, seem to be far less averse to the placing of one's own merits in a proper light. The dignity of political exile must often be appreciated by the art of reading between the lines, while the expressed words but too frequently show a picture of petty bickerings, trifling activities and now and then the stain of betrayal and crime. Being cut off from all real participation in politics, the refugees easily fell into mere phrasemongering, and he who could speak the loudest and most violently, in the safety of a London club or a New York beer garden, was apt to be accounted the ablest and best among them. Still worse was a loss of moral as well as mental perspective. Conditions in their native country were seen in unduly black colors, while the failure of open revolutions led at least some to attempt conspiracies and assassinations. The genius of the German people is not favorable to such enterprises, and although some of the refugees in London were in pretty close touch with Mazzini, the Italian arch-conspirator, nothing

serious ever resulted from such plans. Theoretically, however, tyrannicide was approved by not a few of the more violent minds.

In fact, some of the refugees who soon began writing for papers in the United States, made the killing of tyrants in theory so prominent a feature of their effusions, that German-American slang invented a special term to designate this type of ranter. The man who ate a tyrant for breakfast every morning was called a "*Ferschtekiller*,"⁴⁵ a ludicrous word which well fits the ludicrous personage.⁴⁶ But slightly more serious were the resolutions and manifestos which emanated from these circles, and by the publication of which it was sought to excite the people at home to new revolutionary efforts. Karl Marx, himself one of these exiles, in a letter to the New York Tribune, dated October 25th, 1851, speaks of many of his fellow exiles as "transported beyond the seas to England or America, there to form new governments *in partibus infidelium*, European committees, central committees, national committees, and to announce their advent with proclamations quite as solemn as those of any less imaginary potentates." This sort of rather useless activity employed the energies of many of them for a long time. Wm. Weitling, meeting Julius Froebel in New York, some time after both had left Germany, was told by the latter that he had gone into business as a soap manufacturer. "I have no time for such material occupations,"

⁴⁵) "*Ferschtekiller*," i. e. prince killer. "*Ferschtl*" is a dialectical mis-pronunciation of "*Fuerst*," sometimes heard on the lips of uneducated South-Germans.

⁴⁶) A real prince, even if known as Liberal, naturally would not look on such things as quite so innocent. Duke Ernst II. of Coburg-Gotha, a well-known Liberal in his views, evidently had some apprehensions concerning the "*Ferschtekiller*."

"Es existirten in London zwei deutsche, sozial-republikanische Gesellschaften. Ein eigener Zweig der Mitglieder wurde mit dem Namen Blindlinge bezeichnet, deren es im Mai 1850 achtzehn bis zwanzig gab, wovon sieben in Deutschland und vier speciell in Berlin sich befanden. Die Thätigkeit der Clubs war eben damals eine ausserordentlich gesteigerte Ich hatte damals durch meine Verbindungen in England Kenntniss von der ausgebreiteten Organisation der geheimen Clubs erhalten, welche in ihren Versammlungen den Fürstenmord ganz offen betrieben." Herzog Ernst II., *Aus Meinem Leben*, I., page 578.

was Weitling's proud reply; "I must labor for principle."⁴⁷ There was among them a certain proportion of men who might fairly be classed as "cranks," as is always the case with great reform movements. About that time, the United States as well as Europe furnished no small contingent of reformers on the verge of insanity. This class is amusingly described by Lowell in his essay on Thoreau. Of the abler and more conspicuous of the German refugees in the United States, several died in asylums for the insane. This was the fate of Dr. Kriege, a writer and speaker of some ability, but very extreme views. He had been in the United States several years, but returned to Germany when the revolution broke out, and was conspicuous in the Democratic congresses held at Frankfurt and Berlin during the year 1848. Soon he returned to the United States, was for awhile editor of the "*Illinois Staats-Zeitung*," but died at New York December 31, 1851, little more than 31 years old.⁴⁸ Another man whose mind could not stand the strain was Christian Essellen. He published a monthly magazine, the "*Atlantis*,"⁴⁹ and from reading his own sane, though radical, contributions in the same one would hardly expect him to be "cranky" enough for an incident told by Froebel, who says that he was upbraided as a traitor to the cause of liberty by Mr. Essellen, for wearing kid gloves on the streets of Frankfort.⁵⁰ The "*Atlantis*" was not a financial success, and the struggle with poverty may have contributed to the destruction of its editor's mental health.

Mr. Essellen's extravagant objection to kid gloves was probably shared by not a few of his fellow-radicals. For a contempt of social amenities was a widespread fad among them. This had been

so as far back as the early days of the *Burschenschaft*. Among the men of the older generation, it was especially Jahn, the father of the "*Turner*" societies, who had cultivated rudeness of manner and speech, and disregard of the proprieties of polite intercourse. The intellectual small fry quickly adopted the fad as an easy way of demonstrating that they were true Democrats and haters of tyranny. But even among the abler men a good deal of this affectation was found, and many retained it long after the popular approval of it had ceased. The chief blemish on the writings of many able "Forty-Eighters" in the United States, as for instance Herman Raster, the brilliant editor of the "*Illinois Staatszeitung*," was a delight in the use of strong words, and even expressions which the usage of polite society taboos. In the personal intercourse of such men the same mannerism was apt to crop out, so that strangers were often repelled. Perhaps the fact that so many of the "Forty-eighters" were South Germans may have had something to do with the popularity of the fad among them, for South Germans are often charged by their more conventional brethren of the North with "*Grobheit*." In German slang this foolish affectation became known by the untranslatable term "*Kraftmeierci*." Hardly a trace remains of it among German-Americans.

Still more disagreeable than these extravagances and eccentricities are the petty personal disputes which were rife in the refugee colonies everywhere, and especially the tendency to suspect others of being spies in the pay of the home government. There is no doubt that such spies existed. Especially the colonies of the exiles in Switzerland, Paris and Brussels

47) Froebel, *Lebenslauf*, I., page 280.

48) Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 158.

49) See chapter II.

50) Froebel, *Lebenslauf*, I., page 281.

were under pretty close surveillance; to some extent this was true of England. Whether an attempt was ever made to introduce a similar system into the United States, cannot be asserted or denied. There would seem to be great difficulty in the absence of cooperation on the part of the local police, such as was readily afforded by the French, Belgian and Swiss governments. However that may be, many of the exiles in this country were but too ready on the slightest evidence to charge one of their colleagues with being a spy. This charge was made, for instance, at one time against Carl Schurz; needless to say, it was, in this case at least, absolutely unfounded.⁵¹

These miserable pettinesses and weaknesses were no more than the share of human limitations which belonged to the political refugees as they would to any other group of men in any surroundings whatever. They are more prominent than they deserve in the published recollections of those who lived through that time. This may be explained, to some extent, by the fact that the authors of these reminiscences had, in their old age, come to look upon the foibles and follies of their youthful days in a somewhat humorous light, an attitude which led them to dwell a little unduly on eccentricities and extravagances. This was surely the case with such men as Kapp, Froebel and Bamberger, whose early radicalism had long since matured into a sane love for tranquil progress. That these disagreeable features were far from being essential to the character of the refugee class is best shown by the fact that in the United States, especially, the vast majority needed but a short time to become convinced that their duty

and their interest demanded their entering into the life of the country that had hospitably received them, as an integral portion of its people. Within a few years after their arrival nearly all of them had found some work to do, some occupation, business or profession which gave them a standing in the community and saved them from the make-belief activities of the early days in the refugee colonies.

At first, to be sure, those make-belief activities, those proclamations and speeches and agitation for the renewal of revolutions in Europe, were taken seriously indeed. When Julius Froebel, in 1849, in a lecture delivered at New York, advised his fellow refugees to cease their attempt at revolutionizing Germany and instead take part in American affairs, he was loudly denounced as an apostate and traitor by the radical element.⁵² Very few of the exiles originally came with the intention of making this country their home; they were merely looking for a harbor of safety, where they could remain until, as the phrase went among them, "*es wieder losgeht*," it breaks out again. But as months and years elapsed, and notwithstanding their writings and speeches and collections of penny contributions to provide the means of war, the mails from across the ocean brought no news of fresh insurrections, first necessity, then habit and at last reason brought them to devote their energies to more lucrative and useful objects. About the middle of the sixth decade practically all had taken Froebel's advice.

The acclimatization of the refugees in the United States was on the one hand made easy, and on the other hand considerably retarded by the reception they

⁵¹) Interesting details on this "*Spionen-Riecherei*" may be found in Bamberger's "*Erinnerungen*." On the Schurz incident, see local Wisconsin press, especially Beaver Dam Democrat and the German papers during 1859 to 1860. Also Letter of Schurz to Potter dated March 14, 1859, in Milwaukee Sentinel, April 1, 1900.

⁵²) Froebel, *Lebenslauf*, I., page 283.

found on the part of the people of this country. That the resident Germans, among whom the refugees of an older generation had attained so much influence, should feel a wide and deep sympathy for the newcomers was natural, and perhaps it was no less natural that the native element should to a considerable extent share that sympathy. The struggles of Europe could not but remind Americans of their own revolutionary glories. The masses were unable to perceive the differences between our own war for independence and the preservation of ancient freedom, and the continental attempts to gain a liberty that had never been possessed by those nations. Moreover, the "Jeffersonian ideas" which were identical with the principles of the revolutionists, were just then in full dominion over the American popular mind, after having captured the national government by the advent of Jackson. The result of this combination was that a wave of enthusiasm for the liberty of Europe swept through the United States as soon as the first news of the revolutionary outbreaks reached this country.

The original successes of the Revolution in France, Germany, Italy and other countries were hailed in the United States by a series of mass meetings in which na-

tive-American orators vied with Germans, Frenchmen and Irishmen to praise the deeds of the barricade heroes and prophecy the dawn of a glorious liberty for all the world. Even the Catholics, carried away, no doubt, by Irish sympathies, joined the chorus at first, although soon after they were bitterly opposed to the revolutionary cause. The sympathy for the revolutionaries was for awhile nearly unanimous; about the only opposition came from the ranks of the German Lutherans, who were derived largely from the conservative country population of the Fatherland.⁵³ In addition to mass meetings, attempts were made to provide more substantial assistance for the revolutionaries. Subscriptions to raise money for the insurgents were started and some money actually collected. Several refugees, who had lived in the United States for some time, hurried back to join their brethren, whose complete triumph they fondly anticipated. Among the more prominent of these was Herman Kriege, mentioned above, and Karl Heinzen.⁵⁴ Within a year both were back in America, disillusionized though not discouraged. Others, who were unable themselves to hurry to the seat of the struggle, followed the progress of the movement with the most eager interest.⁵⁵

⁵³) See daily papers of the time; also, Koss, *Milwaukee*, page 263.

⁵⁴) Karl Peter Heinzen had been conspicuous for a number of years in Germany as a writer and pamphleteer of the most radical and decidedly scurrilous type. To escape prosecution he fled to Switzerland. In 1847 a subscription among the Germans in the United States was taken, and with the proceeds he and his family were enabled to come to New York. See Schem's *Deutsch-Amer. Conversations Lexikon*. Koss, *Op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁵⁵) A touching example of the influence the news of the outbreak had on an old Liberal, who was very far from radical in his opinions, and had been in America a long time, is found in a letter from Francis Lieber, then professor at the university of South Carolina, to Dr. S. G. Howe. It also illustrates the popular feeling among Americans. Following is a portion of the letter:

Columbia, S. C., April 8, 1848.

.....An anecdote for you. The other day, when the German news had arrived, I was obliged to lecture. I began—but I could not. I said "My young friends, I am unfit for you this afternoon. News has arrived that Germany too is rising, and my heart is full to overflowing. I—" but I felt choked. I pointed to the door. The students left it—gave a hearty cheer for "Old Germany." Life and letters of Francis Lieber, page 213.

Mass meetings continued to be held in various cities during the summer, whenever the events in Europe afforded an occasion for further celebration. But after a while the prospects of the revolution, even in its more moderate phases, began to darken. In October, Friedrich Hecker, as a forerunner of the swarm of exiles soon to follow, arrived at New York. Hecker had been among the foremost leaders of the Democratic party of Germany, and was more than any other man adapted to become a popular idol. Young,⁵⁶ handsome, with a fiery, though somewhat highly-wrought eloquence, he captivated the hearts of all who came near him.⁵⁷ In April, 1848, he attempted to organize an insurrectionary government, and at Offenbach in Baden proclaimed the German Republic. His little force of insurgents was easily dispersed, and Hecker fled to Switzerland, whence a few months later he embarked for the United States. His object seems to have been to obtain financial and moral assistance from the Germans in this country. The plan of inveigling the United States government into taking a hand in the struggle, which Kossuth and others devised a few years later, seems never to have been conceived by him. Upon his landing in New York, he was received with torchlight processions, mass meetings and speech making,⁵⁸ the city authorities taking a

prominent part in these proceedings. Similarly enthusiastic welcome awaited him at Philadelphia, Cincinnati, St. Louis and other places he visited. In the following spring, when there was renewed fighting in Germany, after the dissolution of the Parliament, Hecker hurried back, accompanied by a number of men anxious to take part in the insurrection, and taking with him some money subscribed in this country. But before he arrived at the seat of war, the Republicans under Sigel had been completely beaten, and the provisional government, under Brentano, was dissolved. There was nothing left for him to do, but return to the United States.⁵⁹

Receptions of the kind given to Friedrich Hecker were not a new thing, although the welcome to political refugees from Europe had never assumed quite the same dimensions as in his case. One of the instances where much had been made of the arrival of a prominent exile was the reception of Dr. Friedrich Seidensticker in the spring of 1846, at New York and Philadelphia.⁶⁰ This seems to have been the first time that the municipal authorities took official part in such ceremonies, as became common enough later on. During the years following the suppression of the revolutionary movements, some of the Republican leaders came to the United States under slightly different

⁵⁶) He was born at Eichtersheim, Baden, as the son of a high official, and was a lawyer by profession.

⁵⁷) Bamberger speaks of him as follows: "Friederich Hecker, ein blau-aeugiger Jünglingskopf mit schönem Haar und Bart, feurig und fröhlich in die Welt hineinschauend und provocirend." *Erinnerungen*, page 52. Malvida v. Meysenbug describes him in these words: "Hecker war sehr schön, ein Christuskopf mit langem blondem Haar und mit schwärmerisch begeisterten Ausdruck." *Memoiren einer Idealistin*, I., page 230.

⁵⁸) See newspapers of the time, Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 80; *Deutscher Pionier*, II., page 85.

⁵⁹) Hecker settled on a farm near Belleville, Ill., where he lived until his death in 1880. In 1856, he was a candidate for presidential elector on the Fremont ticket. During the civil war, he commanded first the 24th, afterwards the 82d Illinois Infantry, both regiments composed entirely of his German countrymen. At the battle of Chancellorsville he was severely wounded.

⁶⁰) See newspapers, especially New York "*Schnellpost*." Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 76.

circumstances. They had the more or less openly avowed intention of prevailing on this country to abandon its settled policy of holding aloof from European quarrels and instead of it interfering on behalf of European revolutionists. The form in which this proposition became crystalized was expressed in the phrase "intervention for non-intervention." This term referred primarily to the case of Hungary, where the power of the House of Austria had been restored by the Czar of Russia. Its meaning was that whenever a popular rising took place for the purpose of establishing a republic, it was to be the business of the United States, as a sort of protector of all republics, whether actual or prospective, to keep monarchical governments from interfering in favor of the threatened dynasty. The most conspicuous visitor of this kind was Louis Kossuth, the revolutionary governor of Hungary. Not being a German, he does not specially concern us here; but there were not a few Germans who entertained hopes that at the proper time the revolutionary cause might become triumphant in Germany as well as in Hungary through the assistance of the United States.⁶¹

About the same time that Kossuth traveled about this country to arouse sympathy for down-trodden Hungary, Gottfried Kinkel, poet and agitator, came to call on his countrymen in America in order to float a so-called "national loan" of two millions of dollars for the revolutionizing of Germany. During the winter of 1851-1852 he visited a large number of cities and was everywhere received with an enthusiasm second only to that which greeted Kossuth himself. He was the representative of a committee of refugees at London, and wherever he went local committees were organized to receive subscriptions. Fairs and bazars were opened by his feminine admirers, and a considerable sum was actually obtained for his purposes, although it fell far short of two millions.⁶² The speeches and resolutions held at Kinkel meetings, like those at the Kossuth receptions, were full of demands upon the government to break with its traditional neutrality and adopt the policy of "intervention for non-intervention." These demands came by no means from foreigners only, but many native-born politicians joined in the chorus.⁶³ However, even the refugees themselves were not unanimously in favor of the "national

⁶¹) In the speeches and the resolutions of mass meetings, city councils and even legislatures, with which Kossuth and other visitors of revolutionary fame were greeted, much may be found that would naturally encourage such hopes. Undoubtedly, these expressions were to some extent pure buncombe, intended to have its effect on foreign-born voters. But the current of real popular sympathy with the revolutionists was very strong, and for a while there may have been some actual danger that our diplomacy might be swept from its ancient moorings. The matter deserves more detailed study.

A curious book which gives an idea of what fantastic projects could be found in the minds of some of the refugees, was published in 1851 by Theodore Poesche, under the title of "*Das Neue Rom.*" This was translated into English by Charles Goepp, later a well known New York lawyer. Mr. Goepp, about the same time, published a pamphlet of his own, called "*E pluribus unum.*" In these writings the idea was advocated of the United States making itself the nucleus of a federation of republics to embrace the whole world. (Theodore Poesche and Charles Goepp, *The New Rome, or the United States of the World.* New York, G. P. Putnam & Co.)

⁶²) About \$10,000. See v. Asten-Kinkel, *Johanna Kinkel in England, Deutsche Revue*, vol. 26, page 71.

⁶³) See besides daily papers of the time Koss, Milwaukee, page 347; Moritz Busch, *Wanderungen, passim.*

loan." Such influential men among them as Boernstein, of St. Louis, and especially the Hungarian Goegg, opposed the whole scheme of establishing the liberty of Germany or any other European country by force from the outside, and maintained that the people of those countries should first be educated up to the point where they desired a new revolution; then they would establish republican institutions of their own motion. Those who thought like this organized "agitation societies" in opposition to the Kinkel committees. Soon the enthusiasm created by the eloquence and captivating personality of the poet agitator died away, and by the middle of the summer 1852 little more was heard either of the national loan or the agitation societies.

By the middle of the year 1852 the situation of the refugee element had changed in some respects from what it was in the fall of 1849. The members of the exile colonies in New York and other seaboard cities had to a great extent given up hopes of a speedy return to the fatherland, and while many remained in the city that at first gave them a resting place, others scattered over the country in quest of a permanent home and occupation. Soon there were few towns in those sections which received a considerable foreign immigration, where some "Forty-eighters" could not be found. Some who had sufficient means, like Friedrich Hecker, joined the ranks of the Latin farmers; others who had some profession of which they could avail themselves in a foreign country, established themselves as physicians, etc. Of the large numbers who had been bred to the law in Germany, comparatively few possessed the requisite adaptability to gain admission to the American bar; those who

did were among the ablest and often achieved high success, professionally and otherwise. Lawyer immigrants who lacked this adaptability were apt to swell the ranks of those who drifted into journalism. During the years following the revolution of 1848 German periodicals of all kinds multiplied with astonishing rapidity, and the "Forty-eighter" element held the editorial chairs in the great majority of such enterprises.⁶⁴

The improvement in the economic situation of the refugee element which this scattering implied was helped along by the universal sympathy which their cause and their fate excited for awhile. People, both of German and native stock, were anxious to help these men, and the fact that one was a political fugitive from Europe was during a number of years the best recommendation possible.⁶⁵ It will now be plain, how, as was stated above, the acclimatization of the new-comers was both retarded and accelerated by the reception they found. So far as they were helped to establish themselves in a permanent occupation, they were led gradually to find their interests here rather than in their old home. But to the extent to which American enthusiasm abetted the plans and purposes of such men as Kossuth and Kinkel, to that extent the wholesome process of Americanization was counter-acted. By the year 1855 the former tendency had gained the upper hand, and it was settled that the refugees as a class would become one of the elements which make up the American people. Thereafter to speak longer of "exile colonies" would be meaningless.

It was natural that men who had allowed their political convictions to sway the whole course of their lives in Germany would not remain indifferent to politics

⁶⁴) Busch in 1851 estimated the number of German periodicals in the United States at 150; a few years later, the number must have been much higher. *Wanderungen*, II., page 97.

⁶⁵) Compare, as an illustration, the incident told by Froebel, *Lebenslauf*, I., page 273.

in this country. But the first contact with American political life was in practically every individual case the cause of a tremendous disillusionment. The politics of these men in Europe had been theoretical and idealistic rather than practical and realistic; it had been a philosophy, and not a business. Now they discovered, that while ideas may be one of the hidden factors determining political currents, the politician in his daily work has to deal with the passions, prejudices and interests of men infinitely more than with ideas. This discovery was a grievous shock to them. With an error of logic common enough they ascribed this fact, not to the human nature to be found everywhere, but to the particular depravity of the American people. They did not realize that they had not made the same discovery at home simply because there they had never had an opportunity to engage in real politics, but had merely philosophized about it, until the year of the revolution. When that outbreak came, they began actual work under such extraordinary circumstances, and amidst such a burst of excited enthusiasm, that again the everyday aspect of politics remained hidden from their eyes.

The disgust which the discovery of the reality caused in these idealists found expression in a flood of books, pamphlets and articles published on both sides of the Atlantic. This species of literature has been referred to in the second chapter. Another circumstance which contributed to the pessimistic view of American political life was the fact that the American idea of a democratic republic was very different from that of the German radicals. Representative institutions seemed to them hardly more than a makeshift, a miserable compromise between aristocracy and democracy. They dreamed of a pure democracy, in which the people

should govern directly. In a congress of "Forty-eighters" held at Wheeling in September, 1852, a platform was adopted in which among a great many other things calculated to make the world over in pretty nearly every respect, the abolition of the presidency and the senate were demanded because those institutions were contrary to democratic principles. Similar demands, as well as such things as the referendum and initiative, those fads of latter-day populism, were frequently advocated by the Radicals. There is something deliciously naive in these propositions for radical changes in our constitution by men, most of whom had not yet been in the country long enough to become citizens. An anecdote told by Julius Froebel may not be literally true, but illustrates perfectly the attitude of a considerable portion of these newcomers. He says that shortly after his arrival in New York he met on the street a gentleman who like himself had been a member of the Frankfurt parliament. "What, are you here too?" he cried. "When did you arrive?" "Last week" replied his friend, and continued: "But, listen, they manage things horribly in this country. And that is what they call a republic? Well, that must be changed!"⁶⁶

Of course, it was largely the small fry of the refugees who were guilty of such extravagances. The men of weight and ability among them, such as Froebel, Kapp, Hecker, Brentano and many others, had more modesty, and knew well enough that there was much for them to learn before they could assume to teach the people among whom they had come. But these better men also looked at our political life through decidedly pessimistic glasses. One of the reasons therefor was the inveterate habit which some of the ablest preserved to the end, of looking at cis-Atlantic politics through European

⁶⁶) Froebel, *Lebenslauf*, I., page 280.

spectacles. All political struggles were, to them, struggles between the aristocratic and democratic principles. From this one-sided standpoint they were trying to find the aristocratic party in this country, and found it, at first in the Whigs with their economic tenets, and afterwards, when the slavery question overshadowed all others, in the Southern wing of the Democracy.⁶⁷ Whenever the actual facts did not tally with this preconceived notion, it seemed proof to those men, not that their theory was wrong, but that American politicians were utterly corrupt and disloyal to their principles. From the same standpoint, it also appeared that the Catholic hierarchy, being on the side of the continental governments in Europe, must in America side with the enemies of liberty; and who could doubt that the monarchical governments themselves were intriguing to assist the allied aristocrats and ecclesiastics in subverting the liberty of the United States? This ingenious logic sometimes went far enough actually to propound the theory that the Southerners pushed the slavery question into the foreground, in order to keep the United States from adopting the policy of "intervention for non-intervention." To do this they were persuaded by the Jesuits, at the instigation of the monarchical governments.⁶⁸

The relations of the refugee element to the political parties will be considered at a greater length in the succeeding chapter. Here we must treat briefly of two matters which have influenced very deeply the attitude of the "Forty-eighters," as well as of the whole German element, towards our political and social institutions. These matters are what for want of a better term may be called Puritanism, and the Church.

The enthusiastic sympathy which greeted the outbreak of the revolution of 1848 and smoothed the path of the exiles during a few years thereafter, did not last very long. When the newcomers were somewhat settled in their new surroundings, their peculiarities could not but jar upon the sensibilities of the astonished natives. As was seen above, modesty was by no means the chief virtue of German Radicals. Nor did they propose to adapt themselves meekly to the ways of those among whom they had settled. Moreover, they were mostly young, without the cautious prudence that comes with age. By reason of their radicalism they had exceedingly little respect for traditional custom and social prejudice, in other words for "respectability." Most of them rather enjoyed shocking the Philistines.

And they did shock them. To be sure, there was nothing entirely new in those Sunday picnics and those convivial meetings at beer gardens and similar resorts, accompanied by music and speech-making, which became so prominent a part of German life in this country. For the last twenty years these things had been known in all those sections where German immigration was strong. But now there was added a certain spirit of defiance and a determined resistance to everything in our laws and institutions which stood in the way of the unhindered following of such customs. At the very time when an agitation for the introduction of "Maine laws" and other devices to combat by legislation the use of intoxicating beverages became popular among large classes, an opposition thereto sprang up which was based, not on expediency, but on principle. To the average native American, the German customs were indications of vice and immorality, especially when it

⁶⁷⁾ See *e. g.*, the English preface to Kapp's "*Geschichte der Sklaverei*."

⁶⁸⁾ Compare on these matters, *inter alia*, Kapp, "*Geschichte der Sklaverei*"; the articles of Essellen in "*Atlantis*."

was learned that the leaders in these things, the orators at those Sunday picnics, were men who openly expressed their contempt for churches and boasted of their "atheism." As long as the Germans in their saloons and beer gardens had been composed almost entirely of uneducated people, the prevailing attitude of Americans had been one of contempt. They found in those customs an ocular demonstration of the degradation in which the masses were kept by the monarchies of effete Europe. But now, when the masses were seen to have leaders and spokesmen who were evidently educated and in many cases able, contempt became mingled with indignation. This was one of the causes which gave such an impetus to the nativistic and "Know-nothing" movements during those years.

It is of course clear that among the thousands of "Forty-eighters" there were individuals of all sorts, and it would be folly to deny that there were some whose characters tallied pretty well with the picture of the class as it existed in the minds of a large number of Americans. That picture was as repulsive as possible—a compound of impiety, sensualism and grossness. At best, the popular view might be represented by the good-natured humor with which Charles G. Leland caricatured the type in "Hans Breitmann's Ballads." But if the ethical worth of the "Forty-eighters" as a class could be compared accurately with that of their native detractors, it is likely they would stand the test very well. The truth was that what is called in German the "*Weltanschauung*" of the immigrants was so different from anything the native American mind was accustomed to, that it was almost impossible to find a common ground from which an understanding between the two classes could be had, until the "Forty-eighter" and the Puritan became united in a common hatred of slavery.

In the preceding chapter it was stated that during the two decades before the revolution the minds of all educated Germans had been under the influence of Hegel's system of philosophy. The radical element, especially, drew its philosophical nourishment from the bold deductions of the so-called Young-Hegelian school. During the last few years before and after 1848, however, the bible by which the average radical was disposed to swear was the works of Ludwig Feuerbach, in which the dogmatism of Hegel was replaced by an almost entirely negative criticism. In accordance with Feuerbach's doctrines, the average "Forty-eighter" was convinced that all kinds of religion were merely the figments of the human imagination, all equally untrue. Belief in the existence of a deity was of the same character. These men were very far from the modest attitude of a modern agnostic. They simply *knew* that there was no God. So far as there was a positive side to this philosophy, it was a more or less crude materialism. Just about this time the physical sciences rose to that overwhelming importance in the public mind which they held during the later half of the century. Few of the refugees had received much training in physical science, but they fell in with the new tendency, and their publications are full of articles designed to popularize scientific facts.

Probably most of the Radicals would have been ready to admit that religion, though it be all airy fantasy, had conferred much benefit on humanity in times past. But whatever may have been the case in former days, the Radicals were firmly convinced that mankind had now come to that stage where it needed stronger food than the fictions which sufficed in its infancy. Religion; in their eyes, had become an unmitigated evil. But as you could not very well fight religion in the abstract, the Radicals became the uncompromising enemies of the concrete repre-

sentatives of the religious idea, in other words, the churches. In these more indifferent days it takes an effort to understand the virulent hatred with which the Radicals of those years pursued priests and ministers. With the true spirit of the fanatic, they would not admit that a clergyman could be a sincere believer in the doctrines he taught. They maintained that all churchmen were simply members of a gigantic conspiracy to keep the masses in mental bondage as the best means of upholding political oppression. A favorite term for a church was "*Verdummungs-Anstalt*," which might be translated "stupidization institute," and the worst term of reproach was "*Pfaff*" (priest, with an opprobrious flavor).⁶⁹

In the fatherland, the churches were one of the principal conservative elements; and it was true enough that state-supported churches could not be but to some extent instruments of state policy. The Radicals drew no distinction between churches so situated and the independent churches of this country. Their fanaticism condemned all alike, nor could they see much difference in principle between Catholicism and Protestantism. Yet it may be said that they hated the Catholic Church a little more, because they considered it the stronger and more dangerous.

Most of the new papers that sprang up after the "Forty-eighters" had come to this country devoted a large portion of their space to attacks upon churches and

priests. Many, also, of the various literary, social and other organizations dominated by Radicals had opposition to church influences as one of their main objects.⁷⁰ The Catholic proposition to divide a part of the public school fund among the various denominations which maintained parochial schools found no more determined opponents than the German Radicals. But these did not limit their attacks to such legitimate matters of dispute. Everything connected with the church, from her dogmas to the private character of her priests, became the object of assault. The temper in which this feud was conducted varied from calm philosophical discussion in Essellen's "*Atlantis*" to the most scurrilous abuse in such publications as Ludvigh's "*Fackel*" and Naprstek's "*Flugblaetter*." The German-speaking Catholics entered on the fight with equal zest and, on the whole, better temper and taste. In several places, e. g. in Cincinnati and Milwaukee, Catholic newspapers were started in opposition to those edited by Radicals. The contest was carried into private and business life. It expressed itself in various forms of boycotting. When a company composed largely of adherents of radicalism founded the little city of New Ulm in Minnesota in 1852, it was stated that they invited to the settlement all Germans except lawyers and priests (*Pfaffen*)⁷¹ The result of this agitation was the introduction of a deep division among the German element,

⁶⁹) The enmity towards the Church persisted in many of these men even after their political radicalism had given place to much saner views. Friederich Kapp, for instance, never had his daughters baptized till after his return to Germany, in 1870, and then merely as a concession to local prejudices. Bamberger tells the characteristic story that the two young ladies, preparatory to the ceremony, were catechized by the clergyman, who was amazed to find that they knew so little of Christianity. "What, have you never heard of Jesus?" he gasped. "Oh, yes," replied one of the girls, "papa says Jesus was a gentleman!" Bamberger, *Op. cit.*, page 202.

⁷⁰) See for instance the *Verein Freier Männer*, organized at Cincinnati in 1855, and from there spreading to other cities. Its constitution says, among other things: "The object of the association is to oppose a strong barrier, on the one hand to the encroachments and liberty-destroying aspirations of priestcraft, on the other hand to indifferentism and intellectual stagnation." *Meyer's Monatshefte*, 1855, page 462.

⁷¹) See "*Deutsche Pionier*," IV., page 462.

which extended to all phases of life and made cooperation between these elements in business, politics and social affairs practically impossible. This division persists to the present day, although the old bitterness has disappeared, and progressive Americanization is likely to heal the wounds at no distant day.⁷²

While the "Forty-eighters" and their adherents were thus engaged in combating the Roman Catholic hierarchy, they paid but little attention to the work of the Lutheran clergy, which during those years built up the powerful chain of congregations and synods which we know to-day. Lutheran orthodoxy was quite as distasteful to the Radicals as Roman Catholicism. But it was the day of small things for the Lutherans, especially in the West, and they probably seemed of little importance to the Radicals. The English-speaking Protestant churches aroused the ire of the "Forty-eighters" especially because they were the principal upholders of Sunday and prohibition legislation, and against both these features of "Puritanism" the Radicals made a determined stand. They shared with the masses of their countrymen an aversion to laws that interfered with their social customs, and in addition they held that all these sumptuary laws, so-called, were incompatible with that individual freedom which they considered the highest social and political good, and on which they conceived American institutions to be built.

To the average American mind, the

open defiance of the customs of the land, with regard to Sunday observance; the open indulgence in beer and wine, in the presence of women and children, who to some extent took part in these pleasures; and to crown all this, the avowal of "atheism" and "infidelity" was nothing less than proof of total depravity. The welcome which the victims of monarchical oppression had found at first was turned into strong aversion, and on the part of many, into fierce enmity. The "Know-nothing" movement was directed as much against the German "infidel" as against the Roman Catholic. The breaking up of peaceful German picnic parties by gangs of rowdies, which had been a common thing during former outbreaks of nativistic hostility, occurred more frequently than ever. In self-defense it was proposed that Germans should arm themselves. Especially among the "Turners"⁷³ an agitation arose for organized, armed resistance to such outrages.⁷⁴ This aided in the rise of the legend that the "foreigners" were arming to destroy American institutions by force. With fine disregard of facts and possibilities, it was soon believed by some that the "Holy Alliance" was behind the increase in immigration during recent years.⁷⁵ When "Know-nothingism" became a political power, election riots in which foreigners, without regard to whether they were Catholics, Protestants or Infidels, were murdered by the score, became of ordinary occurrence in some parts of the

⁷²) An excellent picture of these fights is given in Koss, Milwaukee. The author is very evidently in sympathy with the Radicals, however. Although his story is local in its nature, it is a type of similar contentions which took place whenever there were considerable numbers of Radicals and Catholics.

⁷³) The Nord-Amerikanische Turnerbund is the most successful and permanent of the many associations organized or dominated by the Radical element. On its nature and history, see M. D. Learned, the German-American Turner Lyric, in Publications of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, X., page 79. The article has a good collation of its sources.

⁷⁴) "Galveston Zeitung," August 19, 1855. See Busey, Immigration, page 28.

⁷⁵) See Schmeckebier, The Know-nothings in Maryland, Johns Hopkins University Studies, 1899.

country. The details of these shameful happenings belong to the history of "Knownothingism" rather than that of the "Forty-eighters."

In more respectable quarters than those of "Knownothings" the doings of the Radicals aroused alarm also. How the respectable element of native Americans was impressed may be illustrated by a quotation from an article from the pen of J. B. Angell, in the *North American Review*:⁷⁶

"The free-thinker of Tuebingen is here an editor who regards none of the courtesies of our own life, nor any of our most hallowed customs and beliefs. This is no exaggeration. Many a German is amazed and grieved at the great moral contrasts between multitudes of immigrants and the quiet citizens at home."⁷⁷

Utterances of this kind were common and seem to reflect temperate public opinion with accuracy. From this opinion sprang occasional attempts at missionary work among the Germans. For instance, at Louisville, a committee of Presbyterians issued a call for an organization "to save the Germans, to make them true Christians through the various evangelic churches in this country, and thoroughly Americanize them."⁷⁸ Such attempts, conceived in profound ignorance of the character of the German element and the conditions prevailing among them, remained without results.

While thus the activity of the refugee element among the Germans attracted the attention of native Americans, it must by no means be understood that they were the real leaders of the mass of their countrymen. Among those affiliated with

the Catholic Church, they found, of course, nothing but bitter hostility, and the Catholics were estimated at one-third of the German element.⁷⁹ The large numbers of peasants from Northern and Eastern Germany, who took up farms or remained in the cities as laborers, were utterly impervious to radical and infidel influences. They were then as now the mainstay of Lutheranism. The most fruitful field for radical ideas both in religion and politics, was found among the skilled workmen of the cities. The well-to-do business element, also, may be said to have felt a mild sympathy with the anti-religious ideas of the Radicals. But political Radicalism was abhorrent to this class, and their attitude towards the Church was that of indifferentism rather than hostility. Thus it will be seen that the influence of the Radicals was not altogether proportionate to the noise they made. Still they were the most conspicuous men among the Germans in all public activities. The Catholics and other church people had a tendency of separating themselves from the rest of their countrymen, and taking part in public affairs only when their own immediate interests were at stake. "Forty-eighters" were the orators at most German festivities; they dominated in many singing societies, social clubs and other organizations that had nothing in particular to do with religion or politics, but gave its leading spirits opportunities for becoming known and influential; furthermore, they edited most of the German papers. In this way it came about that the refugee element could bring to the support of the anti-slavery cause the votes and influence of thousands of their countrymen who had no particular sympathy with Radicalism.

⁷⁶) *North American Review*, vol. 82, page 259. (1856).

⁷⁷) See also *Christian Inquirer*, May 31, 1851, which refers particularly to the German press of that time.

⁷⁸) Eickhoff, "*In der Neuen Heimath*," page 227.

⁷⁹) See Loeber, *Op. cit.*, page 433. This refers to a somewhat earlier period, but the proportion seems to have been about constant. Accurate statistics are not in existence.

How this was done will be the main subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SLAVERY.

In the third chapter the reasons were set forth, why the German element in general, and particularly the political refugees of the earlier period, with few exceptions became Jacksonian Democrats. For a number of years after the coming of the "Forty-eighters," the same causes retained sufficient force to lead most of the newcomers also into the arms of the same party. Yet in the very year 1848, the slavery question for the first time caused a split in the ranks. The "Barnburner" section of the New York Democracy carried a number of leading Germans of that state to the support of Van Buren, the freesoil candidate, for president, and a similar secession took place in other states, notably in Wisconsin, where the Freesoilers, with the help of numerous Germans, won a notable success.⁸⁰ But the freesoil movement was abortive in the long run. As the influence of the new arrivals spread, and at the same time the slavery question pushed itself more and more into the foreground, there arose a struggle between the older leaders of the German element and the "Forty-eighters" who desired to supplant them, similar to the fight by which the refugees of 1830 had had to dispute the leadership with the "old settlers" of that day. This struggle became known among German-

Americans as the fight between the Grays and the Greens. The Grays had the advantage of a longer residence in the country, greater familiarity with conditions, greater wealth and old established connections. The Greens, on the other hand, were their superiors in numbers and enthusiasm. They had no personal reasons to attach themselves to any particular party organization, while the Grays, by reason of habit and the manifold personal interests which party affiliation creates, found it difficult to sever their connection with the Democracy, even where they became more and more disgusted with the growing pro-slavery leanings of the party. The inexperience of the Greens led them to favor all sorts of Utopian schemes, including the German State idea, which most of the Grays had happily outgrown. Nor did the radicalism of the Greens, their notions about changing the Constitution of the United States to a pure Democracy, find favor in the eyes of their predecessors, let alone the Socialistic proclivities of a part of the newcomers.⁸¹ In return for the cold water which the Grays poured over these exuberances, the Greens attacked their opponents in bitter tirades, charging them with being traitors to the German nationality, with having no love for anything except their own pecuniary interests. Even the accusation of playing into the hands of the knownothings was not lacking.⁸²

Those among the Radicals who found it impossible to identify themselves with the Democratic party, were at a loss for a

⁸⁰) See T. C. Smith, the Freesoil Party in Wisconsin, Proceedings Wisconsin State Historical Society. 1894.

⁸¹) The most prominent individual in the Socialistic wing of the refugees was William Weitling, who has been mentioned above. He published a number of Socialistic papers in New York and died there in 1871. On the relations of German with American Socialists of that time, see "*Deutsche Pionier*," IV., page 389. The New York Tribune for a while had pretty close connection with some of these men. Karl Marx was its regular European correspondent. Before that time, in 1848, Albert Brisbane, the Fourierist and friend of Horace Greeley, went to Germany and took part in Socialistic agitation in connection with Marx, Anneke and others.

⁸²) See on this point, *e. g.*, an article in "*Atlantis*," III., page 109. (August 1855).

long time as to what party they should support. They were determined to have nothing to do with an organization that lent itself to the support of slavery. The "Barnburner" Democracy was local and by no means distinguished by that heroic loyalty to principle, which Radical enthusiasm demanded. The Freesoil party was ephemeral and ineffective. The abolitionists proper, in their different varieties, were well enough as far as the slavery question went. But unfortunately the atmosphere of abolition circles was very much impregnated with that Puritanism which was distasteful above all other things to German Radicals. How could the materialism and infidelity of the "Forty-eighter" be mated with the religious zeal of the average Abolitionist? As to joining the Whigs, that also was out of the question. In the first place, the Whig party of 1852 was no more outspoken in its anti-slavery sentiment than the Democracy. All the reasons which had in the past kept Germans of all sorts away from the Whigs still held good. In addition the Whig candidate for president, Gen. Winfield Scott, had a rather bad record on the question of nativism.⁸³ Some of the refugees, to be sure, and among them some of the best, like Julius Froebel and Friedrich Kapp, did ally themselves with the Whig party. But they did so at the cost of losing for the time being most of their influence with the German element.⁸⁴ The Whigs never ceased their attempts of gaining votes among the Germans, and Whig papers

of ephemeral life were started in the German centers again and again, to die as soon as financial support by the party organization was withdrawn. The editors of such papers were sometimes refugees who were driven by pecuniary necessities into accepting such positions against their convictions.⁸⁵

Under these circumstances not a few of the Radicals conceived the idea of forming an independent party of their own. Attempts at such an organization were made at several conventions held under Radical auspices. The "*Bund Freier Maenner*," a Radical association originating at Louisville and spreading through most of the Western states, held state conventions in Wisconsin, Kentucky, Ohio, Texas, Indiana and Illinois during the summer of 1853.⁸⁶ The platforms adopted at these and similar meetings were on the whole alike to those of the Wheeling convention of 1852, mentioned above, except that less prominence was given to the Radical programme of constitutional changes, and more to the struggle against slavery. At the same time the German press was full of discussions about the proper place of the Germans in politics. On the whole it seems that a majority even of the Greens realized that an independent German party would simply mean that the influence of the "Forty-eighters," who would lead that party, would be reduced to a minimum. About this time, also, it became clear to many that an agitation for radical principles, conducted exclus-

⁸³) During the campaign an old letter of his was unearthed in which he said: "I now hesitate between extending the period of residence before naturalization and a total repeal of all acts of Congress on the subject. My mind inclines to the latter." Besides, he was charged with having hung, unjustly, fifteen Germans during the Mexican war. See Rhodes' History of the United States, I., pp. 273, 276.

⁸⁴) See Froebel, *Lebenslauf; Aus Amerika, passim*.

⁸⁵) E. g., the case of Roesler, a former member of the Frankfurter parliament, who edited a Whig campaign paper in Milwaukee, in 1852. When he was upbraided for this by some friends, he replied: "You don't know how hunger hurts." Wagner & Scherzer, *Reisen in Nord-Amerika*, page 126.

⁸⁶) See "*Atlantis*," I., page 232.

ively in the German language, would have but a very slight and indirect effect on the American people. Consequently, a number of attempts were made to found periodicals in which German radical principles in religion and politics should be discussed in the English tongue. The journals so founded were all of them short-lived. The most interesting of them was the "American Liberal," published for a while by Christian Essellen, in conjunction with the "*Atlantis*."

It was not until the introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska bill that these blind gropings began to be replaced by more definite and efficient political activity. At first the opposition to the scheme of Senator Douglas was practically unanimous among the Germans. According to Von Holst, there were in the spring of 1854 among eighty-eight German newspapers in the country just eight in favor of the bill while eighty were decidedly opposed to it.⁸⁷ There can be little doubt that this proportion was an accurate reflection of the popular feeling among the Germans. As time went on a large number of the editors felt themselves constrained to change their position with regard to "squatter sovereignty," for too many papers were dependent for their existence on party support. Douglas' condemnation of the pro-slavery outrages in Kansas made the change easier for them, and it may be said that until his death the "Little Giant" from Illinois had no more enthusiastic admirers than the German Democrats throughout the country.⁸⁸ But nevertheless that original outburst of anti-slavery feeling on the part of the German press was significant. It marked the time when the German element ceased to be practically solid on

the side of the Democratic party. Those attempts at forming an independent German party, which had taken so much of the energy of the "Forty-eighters" during the year 1853, had been much like the operations of a body of officers without an army. Now the army began to form behind the leaders. Thousands of German voters began to feel that the Radicals were right, that the Democratic party was nothing but the servant of the Southern plantation aristocracy.

Not only did the "Forty-eighters" find their body of followers; they found also a larger organization of which they could become a part. During the spring and summer of 1854 the Republican party took its rise, and the "Forty-eighters," with a practical unanimity that was not often obtained among that disputatious and opinionated crew, hastened to make themselves a part of the new organization. It speaks well for the kernel of political commonsense and insight that was hidden, after all, behind their shell of extravagances, that the Radicals were so ready to join with the first organization which placed itself avowedly and without reservation on the principle of opposition to slavery extension. For aside from that one principle, there was hardly any sentiment in common between the majority of the new party and their Radical allies. But the German idealists had learned their first lesson in practical politics, to-wit: That in order to gain anything at all, you must not insist on having everything you may deem desirable.

The rise of the Republican party gave renewed vigor to the struggle between the Grays and the Greens. While almost without exception the "Forty-eighters" threw themselves into the arms of the

⁸⁷⁾ Von Holst, Constitutional History of the United States, IV., page 420.

⁸⁸⁾ This was so, although in the very year 1854 he laid himself open to charges of nativistic tendencies by voting against the proposition to allow foreigners who had merely declared their intention to become citizens to participate in the benefits of a homestead bill then pending in Congress.

new organization,⁸⁹ and not a few of the older refugees did the same thing, the Grays, generally speaking, were too closely connected with the Democratic party by personal interest and habit to make such a course possible. They became staunch supporters of "squatter sovereignty," and were aided in their efforts to combat Republicanism by the Catholic element. In the eyes of the latter, the Republican party became almost from the beginning identified with their hated enemies, the "Forty-eighters," and to this day almost every German Catholic in the country is a Democrat.

One advantage the Forty-eighters derived from the rise of the new party was that their papers now had a source of financial support such as the Democratic party was to the Grays. Few of the many new papers springing up in the German centers were independent of such

assistance. The correspondence of Mr. Carl Schurz affords some interesting glimpses into the difficulties of keeping them going.⁹⁰ On the whole the Democratic German press continued to have the advantage, financially; largely, no doubt, for the reason that these papers were older and well established. The following comment by Mr. Essellen is characteristic of the situation: "While the Liberal German papers, surely the great majority of German-American papers, often lead a miserable life (we are of the opinion that there are too many of the little Western sheets) . . . the Hunker sheets have a life of pleasure. Nevertheless it is a strange phenomenon that the latter are often embarrassed to find editors." The writer adds that at the present time two Democratic papers, "Michigan Demokrat" and "Philadelphia Demokrat," are thus orphaned.⁹¹ The ob-

⁸⁹) About the only prominent "Forty-eighter" who remained until the outbreak of the civil war a faithful adherent of the "Straight" Democracy was Oswald Ottendorfer, of the "*New York Staatszeitung*."

⁹⁰) See letter of Carl Schurz to F. J. Potter, dated August 12, 1859, published Milwaukee Sentinel, April 1, 1900, and in Hense-Jensen, "*Wisconsin's Deutsch-Amerikaner*," vol. I., page 317. Also the following unpublished letter of Carl Schurz to John H. Tweedy, now in possession of Henry E. Legler of Milwaukee:

John H. Tweedy, Esq.

Watertown, Sept. 30th, 1857.

My Dear Sir: It was my intention to call on you tomorrow, but some appointments I shall have to fill for the Governor, oblige me to visit the Northern part of the state. I wish to call your attention again to the necessity of doing something for our German-Republican papers, of which the "Atlas" and the "Watertown Volkszeitung" are the most important and the worst in danger of going down. About \$200 have been subscribed by the candidates and a few other friends for the purpose of covering certain notes which I have endorsed and which will fall to my charge if not taken care of by the party. I have helped the papers along with money and endorsements as long as I could, but my sacrifices have been already so heavy and so disproportionate to my means that I must look to the party for help. We cannot get along without those papers; they will be able to sustain themselves if relieved of their debts, and I think no effort ought to be spared. The "Volkszeitung" here needs some aid *immediately* or it will have to stop even before election. I saw Brigham at Madison, and I wish you would communicate with him and the Young Men's Rep. Club. I am somewhat heavily involved with those two papers, and after all I have done, it can hardly be expected that I, under existing circumstances, should run the German Rep. press of the state at my private expense. Besides, I am entirely unable to take up any more of the notes. One of them is already past due and in Noonan's hands. If you would give some attention to this matter you would do a good work for the cause. The papers must be sustained; they are in themselves strongholds which we cannot afford to lose.

I shall probably have the pleasure of seeing you before the end of the week. If you can raise some money for the "Volkszeitung" without delay, however much or little it may be, it will be a good investment.

Yours truly,

C. SCHURZ.

⁹¹) "*Atlantis*," III., page 173. (August, 1855).

servation was probably strictly true. The overwhelming majority of educated German emigrants during the last seven years had been either political refugees or held convictions similar to them; and this element became Republican almost without exception.

While thus the most intelligent portion of the Germans, and particularly the political refugees, cast their weight into the balance for the nascent Republican party, it was by no means an easy task for them to carry an appreciable number of German voters along. As far as mere numbers were concerned they were almost a negligible quantity—a few thousands, scattered through nearly every state of the Union. They were, moreover, comparatively new arrivals. In the far Western states, notably Wisconsin and Iowa, this made little difference because these sections had been but recently settled and few of their countrymen had much the better of them, as far as length of residence was concerned. But in the older centres of German-American life, such as New York, Philadelphia and Cincinnati, their opponents could bring to bear all the advantage the old settler had in business and social relations. The sentimental attachments, also, which the older German residents felt towards the Democratic party must not be underrated. That party had always stood by the foreigner in his struggles against nativism. Everything which the Germans had gained in recognition of their interests as a nationality, the instruction in their mother tongue which the public schools afforded to their children, the relaxation of the Sabbath laws, the successful opposition to prohibition legislation, all was gained with the help of the Democracy. Now came a crowd of newcomers, of greenhorns, barely become citizens, some of them not long enough in the country for that even, men who had no personal knowledge of what the Democracy had

done for the Germans during the last twenty-five years, and denounced that party as hostile to human progress, as the upholder of oppression and slavery, as the enemy of liberty. It was not very easy for the average German voter to believe that tale.

As was the obvious course of political prudence, it became the policy of the German Democrats to minimize the importance of the slavery issue. That was a local question, according to them, with which the people of the free states had nothing to do. As far as the introduction of slavery into the territories was concerned, that would regulate itself. There was no danger of it because it would not pay. The only true policy was that of popular sovereignty in each territory, as advocated by that great statesman and true champion of liberty, Senator Douglas. Such became the tenor of German "Hunker" arguments after the behests of political expediency had repressed the first outburst of genuine feeling caused by the introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. There could be no doubt that the German voters were almost unanimous in their aversion to slavery. The only means of preventing them from going over to the anti-slavery party *en masse* was to keep prominently before their eyes the danger of nativism and prohibitionism.

Accordingly, the Democratic speakers and writers avoided as much as possible the discussion of the slavery question and dwelt the more frequently on the issues more hopeful from their standpoint. Never since the nativistic movement had arisen had there been a greater apparent danger from that side. The Know-nothing order, fighting in the dark and appearing the more formidable on account of the mystery attaching to it; and the "American" party, powerful especially in the border states, gained overwhelming victories in several parts of the country,

obtaining majorities in several legislatures and municipalities. The movement acquired a strong foothold in Congress. Although it did not succeed in passing much legislation hostile to foreign-born citizens, the danger of such measures becoming law seemed imminent. Wherever the American party reached the ascendancy, the worst elements of demagogism became rampant. Although occasionally a man of character, standing and ability identified himself with the movement; as a rule leaders and followers belonged to the worst class of low politicians, and their deeds were a queer commentary on their tirades against the "foreign mobs," upon whose shoulders they tried to load all responsibility for whatever corruption and evil existed in public life. Murder, arson, riots and election frauds were the ordinary weapons of the "Americans." The outrages of a former period, the burning of the convent at Charleston, Mass., and the Philadelphia riots of 1844, were eclipsed by the bloodshed and other crimes in Baltimore, Louisville and elsewhere. At Louisville, on election day (August 4) in the year 1855, the city was in the hands of a mob which killed a number of Germans and Irish, and injured many others, including women and children. A committee of the Common Council, appointed to investigate the outrages, made the ingenious discovery that the whole blame should be laid at the door of "foreigners, papists and infidels" whose houses were said to be arsenals from which Americans had been fired on.⁹²

Occurrences of this kind were very common during the years from 1850 to 1856. It was inevitable, therefore, that they must have a determining influence

on the political action of the German element. The Radicals could no more escape attaching the utmost importance to it than the most inveterate "Hunker." No German, however able or popular, could hope to become or continue to be a leader of his countrymen, unless he opposed to the utmost every vestige of know-nothing sentiment. If the Democracy could succeed in making the German masses believe that the new Republican party was essentially a know-nothing organization, the ablest and most impassioned anti-slavery arguments of the "Forty-eighters" would not be likely to gain a single German vote for that cause.

Know-nothing sentiments were by no means confined to the organization known as the "American" party. What remnants of the Whigs still existed after the defeat of 1852 were full of nativists. Not seldom nativistic leanings were found even in the Democratic ranks, a matter which was duly exploited by the "Forty-eighters." For instance, in a Democratic city convention held at Cincinnati, March 24, 1857, it was claimed by the German Republicans that there were ninety know-nothings against ninety-four "German and Irish" delegates. However that may have been, there were strong protests in that convention against questioning candidates with regard to their views on the know-nothing issue.⁹³ The custom of catechizing candidates on these points had become quite common during recent years.⁹⁴

The period from the defeat of Gen. Scott to the presidential campaign of 1856 was a period of uncertainty for all who sought some organization with which they could ally themselves in op-

⁹²) See, among other places, Eickhoff, *In der Neuen Heimath*, page 227. Schmecke-bier, *Know-nothings in Maryland*; Hennighausen, *Reminiscences*, etc., 11th and 12th Annual Reports, Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland.

⁹³) "*Cincinnati Volksblatt*," March 27, 1857.

⁹⁴) See, *e. g.*, the Baltimore case commented on by Busey, *Immigration*, page 26.

position to the Democracy. The "American" party, notwithstanding its ephemeral successes, obviously lacked the conditions that would make it a permanent factor in politics. Moreover, it did not recognize the truth that the time had come when the slavery question must overshadow all other issues. From its very nature, it had no room for foreign-born anti-slavery men. When the Republican party began to crystallize, during the summer of 1854, the "Americans" in the Northern states, or at least those who had anti-slavery sentiments, at once began to leave its ranks and flock into the new organization in great numbers. In addition to this nativistic element, it was evident that the anti-slavery Whigs who were everywhere the nucleus of the Republican hosts, were to a great extent zealous advocates of prohibition and strict enforcement of the Sabbath laws. Here was the opportunity of the Democrats. By constantly harping on these undeniable facts, they endeavored to keep the German voters from abandoning the party to which they had so long been loyal. The German Republicans, on the other hand, found themselves confronted with a double task. On the one hand they had to inspire the indifferent masses of their countrymen with their own fervent anti-slavery zeal. On the other hand they had to be constantly on guard to keep their own party from following the inclination of so many of its members to run off into the know-nothing and prohibition by-ways.

The odds were almost overwhelming against the little band of fighters for human liberty. That in the face of such difficulties they succeeded in gaining over to the Republican side as many Germans as they did; that they obtained for their followers the balance of power in a number of Northern states, certainly in Wisconsin and Illinois, and probably also in Iowa and Ohio, and thereby made the

final success of the Republican party possible; that they accomplished all this is evidence not only of their loyalty and devotion, but also of the very great amount of political ability which was found in their ranks. That the best among them, such men as Kapp, Muench, Hecker, Koerner, Hassaurek and others, did not become more conspicuous than they did in the history of the United States must be ascribed to the circumstance that they never succeeded in being considered apart from their leadership of a special element of voters. Such special relationship, while it is an advantage in the first few steps of a political career, is a serious drawback later on. Moreover, their leadership among the Germans kept them from ever becoming as thoroughly Americanized as they might have become. In fact some of them, as Kapp for instance, never considered themselves anything but Europeans, and finally returned to their native country to live. Of this whole generation of politicians, Mr. Schurz is almost the only one who outgrew the limitations imposed by his foreign birth.

The identification of the "Forty-eighters" with the anti-slavery struggle had a decidedly broadening effect on these men themselves. They had at last found real political work to do, and yet were not obliged to become disloyal to their high political ideals. Thus their true political ability found an opportunity to display itself. Those radical extravagances fell away from them one by one. As soon as the work of the new party was fairly under way, we hardly find a word in the writings and speeches of "Forty-eighters" about changes in the constitution and similar dreams. Only a few impracticables, like Karl Heinzen, carried on the old futile agitation and soon stood entirely isolated. Or a man here and there, who came dangerously near being a "crank," would destroy his usefulness by a petulant

display of ultra loyalty to "radical principles," like Struve.⁹⁵ But nearly all of them were now fully launched on the stream of real American politics, and found there quite enough work to occupy their energies.

The fight with the Catholics, which had been carried on so vigorously by most of them during the earlier years, now became a source of much embarrassment. It made it impossible for them to gain a single convert among this class and forced them into a three-cornered battle when they opposed the knownothings. The following expressions by Essellen may illustrate their difficulty. After referring to the knownothing riots in Cincinnati in the spring of 1855 and declaring that the nativist movement threatened to result in a civil war, he continues: "Yet we would not wish that Irishmen and Germans should stand together in a struggle that must be decisive for the freedom of America. This alliance does not become the honor of the German name."⁹⁶ The Radical's objection was, of course, not to the nationality of such allies, but to their Catholic religion.

But notwithstanding such embarrassments, the "Forty-eighters" went to work vigorously to assist in organizing

the Republican party, in keeping the new organization out of the knownothing rut, and now and then to gain some local advantage for themselves. Thus at the Cincinnati municipal election mentioned above, Hassaurek⁹⁷ was elected as an independent candidate to the Common Council, over a Democrat accused of nativistic tendencies. The formative period of the Republican party was rather protracted. After the beginning had been made in Wisconsin, Michigan and Vermont, other states followed but slowly, and not until February 22, 1856, was it possible to effect a national organization, at a mass convention held in Pittsburg. Another quotation from Essellen's "*Atlantis*" may show how the situation looked to a "Forty-eighter" in the Fall of 1855: "We have observed on several occasions that the so-called Republican party, both in Ohio and elsewhere, does not form a definite, finished party, with a definite program, but rather an association of various parties and factions, held together only by a negative cement, to-wit: opposition to slavery-extension. The idea at the foundation of this union is correct. For opposition to the encroachments of the slave-holders' party is the most pressing demand of American politics and the best basis of new party formations. But for

⁹⁵) Gustav v. Struve had been, next to Hecker, the most prominent of the ultra-Democratic leaders. In September, 1848, he attempted a second Republican insurrection in Baden, was defeated by the government forces, taken prisoner, but liberated by a mob. He escaped to Switzerland, and in 1851 came to New York, where he engaged in literary work. Among other things he published a universal history in six volumes, probably the most ambitious German work ever published in the United States, except Schem's *Conversations-Lexikon*. After the outbreak of the civil war he was given a commission in the 8th New York Regiment, but resigned when his colonel, Blenker, was promoted and succeeded by Prince Salm-Salm. The reason he gave was that he would not serve under a prince! In 1863, Struve was appointed consul at Sonneberg, but the government of the Duke of Coburg-Gotha refused the *exequatur*. Struve returned to Germany, however, where he lived at Meiningen until his death. He was a phrenologist, a vegetarian, and seems to have been hardly quite well balanced, mentally.

⁹⁶) "*Atlantis*," II., page 230. (March 1855).

⁹⁷) Friedrich Hassaurek, born in 1832, took part in the Vienna insurrection of 1848 and came to Cincinnati in March of the following year. He became editor, first of the "*Hochwächter*," and afterwards the "*Volksblatt*." Under Lincoln, he was minister to Ecuador.

the present this union looks rather chaotic. There are in it many elements with which we adopted citizens cannot make friends. But instead of being deterred by such disagreeable admixtures from taking part in the new formation of parties, we ought rather by zealous participation in the movements for reform try to gain such influence in them that the impure elements will be pushed out of the reform party."⁹⁸ The advice contained in the last sentence was pretty well followed. All over those Northern states where there were large numbers of German voters "Forty-eighters" were conspicuous among Republican workers, and everywhere, in conventions and mass meetings, they insisted on committing the party against nativism. For instance, in Ohio, they succeeded in having such resolutions passed by the local conventions in Toledo, in Sandusky, in Tuscarawas County and elsewhere. In Wisconsin, it was understood from the beginning that without the help of German votes the Republicans could not win, even in this Western stronghold of the new party, and a German was placed on every state ticket as a matter of course, as well as on local tickets of candidates in all those counties where the Germans were massed. In this state, where there was then a larger proportion of foreign-born voters than anywhere else, all parties vied in declaring their opposition to nativistic encroachments on the rights of adopted citizens. For instance, in the legislature of 1857, where the Republicans had a majority, the Republican Allen moved a resolution instructing the representatives of the state in Congress to vote against changes in the naturalization laws. At once a Democrat,

Strong, amended the resolution so as to instruct the representatives to vote for a change in the laws making naturalization easier. The amended resolution was adopted.⁹⁹

When the first national Republican convention met at Pittsburg, in 1856, for the purpose of effecting a national organization, Charles Reemelin of Ohio seems to have been the only foreign-born German present. He belonged to the older generation of immigrants,¹⁰⁰ and was not strictly speaking a political refugee, but entirely in sympathy with the "Forty-eighters," as far as the slavery question was concerned. According to George W. Julian, no mean judge, his speech was "by far the strongest speech in the convention." He "arraigned know-nothingism as a scheme of bigotry and intolerance, and a mischievous side issue."¹⁰¹ He was vigorously applauded, but the platform adopted by the convention was silent on that point, as indeed on everything except slavery extension. As the meeting contained numerous former members of the "American" party, this was perhaps the prudent course. The Philadelphia convention in June, which nominated Fremont for president, was a little bolder and embodied a mild plank against "proscriptive laws" in its platform.*

By dint of hard work and never failing vigilance the German Republicans man-

* EDITORIAL NOTE. — This resolution actually originated in Illinois. In the convention of Republican editors of Illinois, held in Decatur in February 1856, Georg Schneider, editor of the *Illinois Staatszeitung*, introduced a set of resolutions denouncing human slavery as well as proscriptive

⁹⁸) "*Atlantis*," III., page 164, (September 1855).

⁹⁹) *Journal Wisconsin Assembly*, 1857.

¹⁰⁰) See *supra*, chapter II.

¹⁰¹) G. W. Julian, *The First Rep. National Convention*, *American Historical Review*, IV., page 318.

aged fairly well to keep the nativistic and prohibition sentiments out of the official utterances of the new party. But of course that did not keep the Democrats from insisting that these sentiments were present just the same, though concealed from motives of political expediency. While the same causes which gained Republican recruits among the native population had their effect on the German voters, the fear of nativism and prohibition kept this class from going over almost in a body, as they might very

measures against foreign immigration. and it was due to his untiring efforts, able abetted as he was by John M. Palmer, Norman B. Judd, Burton C. Cooke and not the least by Abraham Lincoln, who told his old whig friends that Mr. Schneider's resolutions contained nothing but what was laid down in the declaration of independence, that they were adopted in spite of the very large "American" element represented in the convention. In the celebrated Republican State convention held at Bloomington in Illinois in May following resolutions of the same liberal character were adopted and Mr. Schneider was elected a delegate at large to the Philadelphia convention, which nominated General Fremont for president. In this convention the "American" sentiment was still very strong, a large part of the delegates favoring an amalgamation with the American party, which with that very object in view held its national convention at the same time and place. But the Illinois delegates at once set to work to counteract this influence, and succeeded to elect the liberal-minded Henry Lane of Indiana for permanent chairman of the convention, who warmly favored the Illinois resolutions. These were embodied in the platform and were carried against the strenuous opposition of Thaddens Stevens and others, who expressed the fear that they might offend the great "American" party of Pennsylvania. There is hardly any doubt that by the action of the convention the young republican party was purged of the greater part of non-progressive elements and the way was paved for an overwhelming number of citizens of German descent to embrace the principles of the new party of liberty.

likely have done if their dislike of slavery had had full sway. As it was, even those who became out-and-out Republicans in national politics nearly always retained sufficient independence to vote against their party in local elections whenever they thought it necessary as a protection against the dreaded spectres of Puritanism and Knownothingism. For instance, in the Ohio campaign in 1855, they supported the Republican candidate for governor, Chase, but would have nothing to do with the rest of the state ticket, the candidates on it being suspected of nativism. In the following year a similar thing occurred in Baltimore. There the German paper, "*Der Wecker*," was the only Republican journal in the State. Under the successive editorship of Wilhelm Rapp and Franz Sigel, both "Forty-eighters," it was bold and uncompromising in its anti-slavery advocacy and made a specialty of working for the homestead bill, which the Republican party favored. Fremont had its enthusiastic support for the presidency. But in all local elections it favored the Democratic tickets without reserve, and the Germans of Baltimore continued to vote with that party in sheer self-defense against the "Americans" who were nowhere more turbulent and bloodthirsty than in Maryland.

During the presidential campaign of 1856, the "Forty-eighters" were everywhere conspicuous in the support of Fremont. Friedrich Hecker, the chief of the first Baden insurrection, was a candidate with Abraham Lincoln on the Republican electoral ticket in Illinois, and went on the stump in others besides his home state. Thus he spoke at a meeting in Philadelphia, together with Reinhold Solger, of Boston, and at the Academy of Music in New York with Friedrich Muench and Gustav Struve, where Froebel presided.¹⁰² Koerner, Kapp and Hassaurek were a few of

102) Froebel's speech on this occasion is reprinted in his "*Kleine Politische Schriften*."

the other prominent German Republican speakers, all "Forty-eighters" or closely allied to them. In Wisconsin this campaign brought forward for the first time a young man who was soon to eclipse all the rest and become in the eyes of the native-born the one political representative of the German element. This was Carl Schurz, who for three years past had lived in the little village of Watertown. He was not yet a citizen of the United States, though under the liberal laws of his adopted state a voter. Young though he was, his name was known to every German because of his daring rescue of his beloved teacher, the poet Kinkel, from a Prussian prison.¹⁰³ The halo of romance which this exploit cast around him, made him interesting also to native Americans, and undoubtedly aided him in his political career.

Mr. Schurz had some advantages over his fellow "Forty-eighters" which made it quite natural that he rather than one of those who had been leaders in Germany should become the most conspicuous political leader among the Germans in this country. First of all, he was very young when he came to the United States. When by the side of Kinkel he took part in the revolutionary events of 1848, he was but nineteen years of age. Thus, when four years later he came to this country, he was still at a period of life when he could easily adapt himself to new surroundings. His youth saved him from running to seed in those Radical vagaries in which so many other refugees became engaged during their first years of life in America. With astonishing rapidity he made himself master of the English language. While very many of the "Forty-eighters" never acquired the power of making a speech in

English, and consequently the influence of their oratory remained limited to their countrymen, Mr. Schurz had from his first entry into public life the command of English as well as his mother tongue. This fact, together with his brilliant abilities, marked him out from the start as one of the few Germans who could form a connecting link between the great body of Americans and the immigrated German element.

Although Fremont was defeated in this campaign, the German Republicans no more than other members of the young party lost courage on that account. Immediately after the election was over, some Boston Germans issued a call to form a "Republican organization of all Germans in the Union." The call was signed by Dr. Kob, Dr. Finois, C. Schmidt, Dr. Douai, A. Babo. The proposition caused a lively discussion throughout the country, and was generally favored in the East. But in the Western states the plan met with much opposition, and little came of the project. The German Republican Club of Milwaukee, in which Domschke, the editor of the "*Atlas*," was the leading spirit, declared itself against a separate national organization, because that might irritate the nativistic element. Domschke's paper added editorially the plea of poverty on the part of the Western Republicans.¹⁰⁴ The German Democratic paper at Milwaukee, the "*Banner*," affected to believe that this action was a sign of the Republican party falling to pieces, and hailed it as an indication of "the light entering into the heads of the German idealists." Whereat the "*Atlas*" became mightily indignant and wrathful.

During the next four years the struggle of the "idealists" to win their countrymen

¹⁰³) See supra, chapter IV.

¹⁰⁴) "*Atlas*," December 13, 1856.

away from the slave holders' party went on with various vicissitudes, but on the whole with fair success. The main bones of contention remained as before "know-nothingism" and "temperance." One of the worst set-backs the Republicans received was the passage, in 1859, by the Massachusetts legislature, a strongly Republican body, of a law providing that naturalized citizens should not be allowed to vote until two years after acquiring full citizenship. The Democrats pointed out triumphantly that now at last the Republicans had thrown aside the mask of friendliness towards foreign-born citizens, and stood revealed as what they really were, inveterate know-nothings. The only defense the Republicans could make was that the obnoxious law was a local affair and that the party as a national organization was not in sympathy with it. But the party was evidently injured by it all over the country, and in those states where the German vote was largest the leaders became much frightened. In Wisconsin, the Republican state convention of that fall went so far as to insert in their platform a plank expressly condemning this law adopted in another state.

In the meantime Wisconsin, which for some time had had the reputation of being "the most German state in the Union," had been involved in troubles of her own that had their effect upon the national Republican party. In 1857, the Republicans had nominated Carl Schurz for lieutenant-governor. But when the votes were counted, it appeared that he was defeated by 107 votes, out of a total vote of 88,932, while the Republican candidate for governor, Randall, had been elected by 454 votes. The rest of the Republican ticket was likewise success-

ful. It could be assumed with perfect assurance that a large number of German Democrats had scratched their tickets in favor of their countryman. Consequently it was clear that a considerable number of native-born Republicans had refused to vote for Schurz. Naturally the Democrats did not fail to point to this fact as convincing proof that notwithstanding the official protestations towards foreign-born citizens the Republican party was dominated by know-nothing influences. The German press throughout the country made much of the affair, and everywhere the Republicans found their task of converting German voters made more difficult. In Wisconsin itself a movement was started by a number of German Republicans to bring about the nomination of Mr. Schurz for governor at the election of 1859.¹⁰⁵ The movement was unsuccessful and Gov. Randall was renominated by a large majority. Mr. Schurz was tendered the nomination for lieutenant-governor, but he declined to make the run for that office a second time.¹⁰⁶ This result was brought about in part by the great personal strength of the governor, in part by the nativistic tendencies actually existing to some extent. But there was also a third reason for the German leader's defeat in the peculiar character of his and his friends' Republicanism.

It is essential for an understanding of the political course, not only of Mr. Schurz individually, but of a large portion of the German Republicans of the country, to bear in mind that the German voters had for a generation been Democrats almost to a man. Although the "Forty-eighters" had never been so closely connected with the party organization as their opponents, the "Grays," they

105) See Milwaukee Sentinel and Manitowoc "*Demokrat*," during 1859.

106) Milwaukee Sentinel.

shared with them to the full their devotion to "Jeffersonian principles" and especially the doctrine of states' rights and a strict construction of the constitution. When the Republican party was organized it drew to itself on the one hand the Whig element, which believed in liberal construction, and on the other hand the Freesoilers and "Forty-eighters," both of whom remained strict constructionists and states' rights men. As long as the question was simply about the resistance to slavery aggression, these elements could work together very well. But as soon as their more fundamental principles were involved, a clash could hardly be avoided. A series of peculiar and interesting events in Wisconsin had brought these contrary tendencies into very sharp opposition, and this contributed to the defeat of Mr. Schurz in his aspirations for the gubernatorial nomination.

On March 11, 1854, a fugitive slave named Glover had been rescued from his captors by a mob in Milwaukee. Some of the leaders of the rescuers, among them Sherman Booth, a prominent abolitionist agitator, were imprisoned by the federal authorities, but released on a writ of habeas corpus issued out of the Supreme Court of the State of Wisconsin. The litigation growing out of this case was very protracted. In a number of lengthy and elaborate opinions the state court held, in effect, that a state tribunal may interfere with the process of a federal court where the latter acts without jurisdiction, and that the fugitive slave law was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court of the United States, on appeal, laid down a contrary doctrine and reversed the judgment of the state

court.¹⁰⁷ The argument of the latter was based entirely on the traditional grounds familiar in the mouths of the strict constructionists. In the spring of 1859, a few months prior to the state convention before which Mr. Schurz was a candidate for governor, Byron Paine was a candidate for the Supreme Court. He was known to favor the doctrine of the unconstitutionality of the fugitive slave law, and the right of the state courts to enforce that doctrine. On March 23, in Milwaukee, Mr. Schurz delivered a speech in support of Mr. Paine, which was an elaborate argument in favor of the most extreme states' rights views, with Calhoun as the principal authority quoted. This speech was printed in full in the Milwaukee Sentinel, as well as distributed in pamphlet form. It was not surprising that such utterances, coming from a Republican, should offend the old Whig element in the party. Several of the leaders, and particularly Timothy O. Howe, who later became a senator in Congress from Wisconsin, felt constrained to oppose these doctrines with all possible vigor, and did so, among other ways, by resisting the claims of Mr. Schurz before the state convention.¹⁰⁸

The peculiar type of Republicanism to which most German members of that party inclined during this period is illustrated also by the course of another prominent German-American politician, Charles G. Reemelin of Ohio. This gentleman seems to have attended the Pittsburg convention of 1856, where he made the strong impression mentioned above, with the idea that it was not intended to organize a permanent party, but merely to bring together all anti-

¹⁰⁷) See Vroman Martin, *The Fugitive Slave Law in Wisconsin*, Proceedings Wisconsin State Historical Society, 1895. Also 3 Wis. 1; 3 Wis. 145; 18 How. (U. S.) 476; 21 How. (U. S.) 506.

¹⁰⁸) See letters of T. O. Howe in Hense-Jensen, *Wisconsin's Deutsch-Amerikaner*, vol I. page 315. Also Milwaukee Sentinel, *passim*.

slavery elements for the one purpose of preventing the extension of slavery in the territories.¹⁰⁹ In fact, Mr. Reemelin was of the opinion that the existence of permanent parties was an unmitigated evil, at the bottom of all our political ailments. With these ideas in mind he supported Fremont. But being a firm believer in states' rights and strict construction, he could not bring himself to support Lincoln in 1860, on account of that candidate's views on constitutional questions. Consequently he was, according to his own narrative, in a great quandary. For Douglas he had supreme contempt. "I regarded him as the most dangerous man in the United States." Bell was a nativist, and consequently out of the question for a German. So this anti-slavery man, from sheer loyalty to the doctrine of states' rights, declared in favor of Breckinridge. "I knew personally," he says in his autobiography, "that Breckinridge was no pro-slavery man, that he desired a settlement which would have left us the integrity of our constitution and saved personal liberty, all without war and its bloody and other false solutions." Naturally, the accession of so influential a convert to their rather thin ranks gave great joy to the Breckinridge Democrats of Ohio, and they hastened to confer upon him the honor of a nomination for presidential elector at large, which "was thrust upon me against my desire," he says.¹¹⁰

The great majority of the German Republican leaders were fortunately not quite so *doctrinaire*, but had common sense enough to throw all their energies into the fight for Lincoln's election, no matter what they may have thought of their candidate's views on the construction of the constitution. In the Chicago

convention which nominated him, there were among the delegates such well-known Germans as Muench, and Krekel, of Missouri; Koerner, and Geo. Schneider, of Illinois; Hassaurek, of Ohio; and Schurz, of Wisconsin. All of these, with the exception of Krekel, belonged to the class of political refugees. Mr. Schurz had had some difficulty in being elected a delegate. Again the Milwaukee states' rights speech had risen up to threaten his success, but the objections made by the Whig element were finally withdrawn, and he was made chairman of this state delegation. The Germans in the convention were in favor of Seward for president. Mr. Schurz was one of the managers for Seward, in company with Austin Blair, of Michigan, and William M. Evarts of New York. The reasons why the Germans were strongly in favor of the New York statesman seem to have been twofold. Their university training made them prefer the highly educated and philosophical Easterner to the able but comparatively uneducated and somewhat uncouth Illinoisian, and in addition Seward had endeared himself to all foreigners by his determined opposition to know-nothingism.¹¹¹ When their favorite was defeated, the Germans did not sulk, but entered the campaign with enthusiasm. Nearly all the old Radical leaders were active on the stump. Carl Schurz remained the most conspicuous among them. His fame had by this time spread far beyond the limits of his adopted state or his own nationality. In 1858 he had been one of the speakers in Illinois, during the great Lincoln-Douglas campaign. In 1859 he delivered a speech at Boston, in which he attacked nativism in what was considered its particular home, so far as the North was concerned. During the

¹⁰⁹) See Reemelin, *Life*, page 130.

¹¹⁰) Reemelin, *Life*, page 158.

¹¹¹) See John Sherman's *Recollections*, I., page 137.

campaign of 1860 he was one of the most prominent orators on the Republican side.¹¹²

A peculiar position was held by the Germans residing in the slave states, and particularly the border states and Texas. In Maryland, especially the city of Baltimore, and, in Kentucky, Louisville had very considerable German elements. In Missouri, St. Louis was one of the German strongholds of the country, and a number of counties in the Northern part of the state were almost entirely settled by Germans. Nowhere was the fact more evident than here that the Germans of all classes had no sympathy with slavery. A German slaveholder was a rare exception. In all these states there was a large percentage of political refugees among the immigrated Germans, and these were conspicuous in their fearless opposition to slavery. Their abolition views were usually not at all concealed, notwithstanding the danger which attended all expression of such sentiments in a slave state. It was evident that the violent outbursts of know-nothing hatred, which gave Baltimore and Louisville such unenviable notoriety during the decade before the civil war, must be ascribed in no small degree to pro-slavery fear of these bold German abolitionists.

As far back as 1851, when Thomas Benton had his great fight with the extreme pro-slavery wing of his party, he found his principal supporters among the Germans of his state. Conspicuous among these was a St. Louis lawyer, Alexander Kayser, who was one of those that had

come to the United States under the influence of Gottfried Duden¹¹³ and at first tried the experiment of Latin farming. He was an enthusiastic admirer of Senator Benton, but when the Republican party was organized he was one of the first to join it, although his leader held back.¹¹⁴ His anti-slavery sentiment was of a more moderate sort than that of many of his countrymen, who in 1857 organized themselves as the "Free Democrats" and severely condemned a set of resolutions adopted by the state legislature, by which it was attempted to put a stop to the agitation for gradual emancipation. These resolutions were characterized by the meeting as "an assault on free speech and the freedom of the press."¹¹⁵ These more extreme anti-slavery men had the enthusiastic support of the German Radicals, among whom was Heinrich Boernstein.¹¹⁶ While in other states the Republicans made converts among the Germans only with considerable effort and with constant danger of seeing them slide back into Democracy for fear of prohibition and nativism, the reverse was the case in Missouri. In this state, where the Germans knew slavery and its baneful effects by their own experience, and where the dominant element in the Democracy had the most extreme pro-slavery views, the Germans soon became Republican in their overwhelming majority. Only a few of their leading men, among whom Christian Kribben, the speaker of the house in the legislature of 1858, was the most conspicuous, remained true to the old party. The political complexion of the Missouri

112) As to some of Mr. Schurz' speeches in this campaign, see New York Tribune, June 30, August 15, August 17, September 3, October 19, 1860.

113) See *suprà*, chapter III.

114) Kayser was born in Rhenish Prussia, February 1, 1815, came to St. Louis 1836, was presidential elector in 1852, died during the civil war. Koerner, *Op. cit.*, page 342

115) "Anzeiger des Westens," March 27, 1857.

116) See *suprà*, chapter II.

Germans became of the utmost importance to the welfare of the country; when in May, 1861, the pro-slavery men of the state with the governor at their head tried to force Missouri into the Confederacy. If it had not been for the fact that there was a large German population in St. Louis, and that this element was Republican in its great majority and loyal to the Union practically without an exception, Capt. Lyon would have been unable to capture the camp of the state militia. Three-fourths of the volunteers under his command were Germans. Of the colonels of his four regiments, three, Boernstein, Sigel and Schuettner, were political refugees from the Fatherland.*

* EDITORIAL NOTE. — In speaking of the great work done by the Germans in Missouri in the cause of human liberty Dr. Emil Preetorius, a political refugee of 1848, deserves special and most honorable mention. Born in 1827 in Rhenish Hesse he studied law at Heidelberg and Giessen and settled in St. Louis in 1853. During the presidential campaign of 1860 he was one of the staunchest supporters of Abraham Lincoln and in the following spring, as well as throughout the war, he took a leading part in the organization of Union troops in his state. In 1863 he became the editor of the *Westliche Post*, one of the most widely circulated German dailies in the country, and he is still at the head of that journal. As a writer and lecturer on topics political, aesthetical and philosophical he has gained high distinction.

In no state did the Germans form a more important part of the population than in Texas. Here large settlements had been formed by them even prior to the admission of the state into the Union. In 1856 the *New York Tribune* estimated their number at 20,000,¹¹⁷ most of whom were massed in a few of the Western counties, with New Braunfels and San Antonio as their most important centers. Among them slavery was practically unknown, and their settlements exhibited the advantages of free labor by their superior prosperity and the greater standard of comfort prevailing in them.¹¹⁸ This flourishing community had received a more than ordinary share of political refugees, who were as outspoken in their radical opinions as they were in any Northern state. While most of their countrymen held their peace on the question of slavery and opposed it simply by their example, the Radical element went farther. In 1853 one of their speakers, Wipprecht, is quoted as saying at New Braunfels: "Let us oppose the further extension of this slave-holding population in Western Texas, for we had cultivated and settled this country before the natives thought of doing so."¹¹⁹ In 1854, at San Antonio, resolutions were adopted demanding gradual emancipation.¹²⁰ Dr. Charles Douai, one of the most radical among the "Forty-eighters,"¹²¹

¹¹⁷) *New York Tribune*, January 4, 1856.

¹¹⁸) See F. L. Olmsted, *Journey through Texas*.

¹¹⁹) Busey, *Immigration*, page 32.

¹²⁰) On the question of states' rights regarding slavery, the resolutions were as follows:

"Die Sklaverei ist ein Uebel, dessen endliche Beseitigung den Grundsätzen der Demokratie gemäss nothwendig ist; da sie aber nur einzelne Staaten betrifft, so fordern wir, dass die Bundesregierung sich aller Einmischung in Sachen der Sklaverei enthalte, dass aber, wenn ein einzelner Staat die Beseitigung dieses Uebels beschliesst, alsdann zur Ausführung dieses Beschlusses die Bundeshülfe in Anspruch genommen werden kann." See Olmsted, *Op. cit.*

¹²¹) Douai had been principal of a school at Altenburg, in Thuringia, and came to the United States in 1855. After his Texas experience he went to Boston and later to New York, where he became well known as an educator and writer, principally on pedagogical topics. He was mentioned above as one of the Boston signers of a call for a German Republican organization.

for awhile published a German paper in San Antonio, in which he advocated abolition. Some of his exciting experiences in this connection are interestingly told by F. L. Olmsted, who, however, does not give his name.¹²²

The activity of the political refugees during the civil war and in the period thereafter does not come within the limits of this monograph. It is well known that a number of them, like Sigel, Osterhaus, Willich and others rose to high rank in the Union army, while hundreds of others served faithfully in more subordinate capacities. It may safely be said that not a single refugee of any note became disloyal to the government of the United States or to the principles of human liberty for which he had contended in his native country. Even Oswald Ottendorfer, who was one of the few "Forty-eighters" that failed to join the Republican party, promptly resigned his candidacy for presidential elector in 1860, when the Democratic convention at Charleston was captured by the extreme pro-slavery men, and during the whole of the armed conflict he was a devoted adherent of the Union cause. In Texas the Germans with the refugees as their leaders formed the nucleus of a strong Union party, and many of them suffered severely for their loyalty, notably Edward Degener, a member of the Frankfurt parliament, and after the war a representative in Congress. During the reconstruction period the political power of the Germans in Missouri and Texas

was naturally great, greater than it has been at any other time, and this gave additional prominence to a number of "Forty-eighters," notably Carl Schurz, who had removed to St. Louis and was elected a senator in Congress from Missouri. The fact that the German Republicans of that generation had Democratic rather than Whig antecedents must not be forgotten when it is sought to explain why so many of them drifted back into the Democratic ranks after the slavery question had been disposed of.

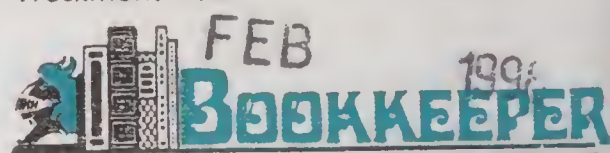
The serious work of the anti-slavery agitation and the civil war produced a great change in the mental attitude of the revolutionists of 1848. The eccentricities of the early years in exile wore off; the excessively idealistic notions of politics were modified by a sounder conception of the realities of things. Theory was superseded by practice. The radicalism of 1852 disappeared with great rapidity. Soon Carl Heinzen remained almost its only representative, and when he died at Boston, in 1880, his political views had long ceased to be a vital force in the German-American population.

It would be extravagant to assign to the German political refugees a central position in any of the crises of our national life. But the effects of their activity are important, and a true understanding of the development of the American people, the shaping of parties and their rise and fall, is impossible without taking them into account.

THE END.

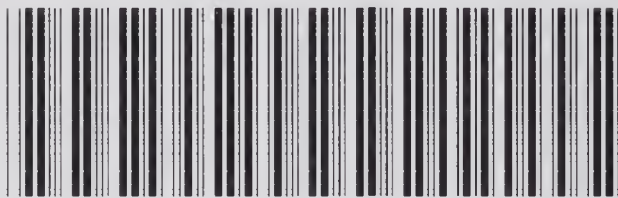
¹²²) In Helper's "Impending Crisis" it is stated on the authority of Cassius M. Clay that "in Texas among the German settlers, who true to their national instincts will not employ the labor of a slave, they produce more cotton to the acre, and of a better quality, and selling at prices from a cent to a cent and a half a pound higher than that produced by slave labor." *Impending Crisis*, page 182.

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